



United States  
of America

# Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 117<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 168

WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 2, 2022

No. 38

## House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MCGOVERN).

### DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,  
March 2, 2022.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JAMES P. MCGOVERN to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,  
*Speaker of the House of Representatives.*

### MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 10, 2022, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with time equally allocated between the parties and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

### REMEMBERING RESULTS ADVOCATE LA'SHON MARSHALL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Michigan (Ms. TLAIB) for 5 minutes.

Ms. TLAIB. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memories of Michigan's 13th District Strong mother, friend, sister, and community advocate, La'Shon Marshall; her partner, Aaron Benson; and her 5-year-old son, Caleb, all of whom we lost to senseless gun violence this past week.

I knew La'Shon Marshall as a loving mother, a daughter, and a friend, but I

knew her also as a constituent and as part of a group called RESULTS. It is an antipoverty advocacy organization, and RESULTS would meet with me every year to talk about adjusting poverty and access to quality housing for our families.

In one of my first meetings, I met La'Shon, and she was passionate. She talked about renters' rights. She talked about access to safe housing. We made an instant connection based on our mutual passions: housing stability, ending childhood poverty, and ensuring a better quality of life for all.

Hearing of her murder was devastating not only to my team and me but to our community. This is a tragedy that no community should endure.

La'Shon was truly a beacon of light. She will be remembered as an incredible mother, and we will always remember Caleb as the light of her life. She truly loved him. And I will always remember knowing her as an exceptional advocate for the 13th District Strong.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in remembering La'Shon Marshall, Caleb Marshall, and Aaron Benson of our community as we mourn their loss.

MOURNING THE LOSS OF TERRANCE ARMOUR AND  
CARLY TAYLOR

Ms. TLAIB. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my outrage and deep sadness about the deaths of Wayne County teens Terrance Armour and Carly Taylor, whose lives were lost to gun violence last year.

Carlesa and Terrance were accomplished high school students with bright futures ahead of them. Terrance had plans to attend college in Nevada. Carly was a standout on the Ecorse High School basketball team who was being recruited for college athletic scholarships and opportunities.

This past weekend, I hugged both of their mothers, and I remember the tears from Dionne Weathers and Tikia Armour-Brooks. There is a saying that

the most painful good-byes are the ones that are never said and never explained.

As we mark this grim anniversary, I offer my deepest sympathies to Terrance and Carlesa's families and loved ones and commit to stopping gun violence in our country. And as they continue to mourn their loss, I want them to know we are working on behalf of them and also in honor of their memories.

SUPPORTING THE HONORING OUR PACT ACT

Ms. TLAIB. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to speak today in support of the Honoring Our PACT Act.

Our soldiers put their lives at risk every day and became severely ill as a result of burn pit exposure. We owe it to them to care for them in their time of need. I am voting "yes" on the PACT Act because they deserve nothing less.

I greatly appreciate the work of Chairman TAKANO, the members of the committee, and the staff in getting this task done. It was not easy. However, I must be clear. While this bill is clearly the best attempt yet to pay our Nation's debt to our sick and dying veterans, it is only a first step. It does not cover all the illnesses believed to be caused by burn pit exposure, and it does not fully invest in new, innovative treatments that could drastically improve their quality of life and recovery chances.

To hear some of my colleagues, including many who happily vote for every absurd defense budget without a blink of an eye, complain about the cost of treating our veterans is downright insulting. It is time for Congress to do its job and care for our veterans.

Let's start by passing the Honoring Our PACT Act and then immediately get back to work on new legislation that comprehensively covers any veteran who has become ill as a result of exposure to toxins during their service to our country.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



Printed on recycled paper.

H1211

## RUSSIA INVADES UKRAINE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BROOKS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROOKS. Mr. Speaker, as background, I have served on the House Committee on Armed Services for 11 years and on the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

There is an old saying: Those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it.

The lesson from Vietnam is that war is hell. If America is unwilling to do horrible things required to win a war, then America should not fight it. Be all in or all out.

A World War II lesson is that Europe's pre-war appeasement strategy does not work against aggressor nations. In the 1930s, Adolf Hitler and his National Socialist German Workers' Party time and again seized more and more of Europe. Beginning in 1935, Adolf Hitler and dictatorial socialist Germany annexed the Saarland; invaded and seized Austria in the Anschluss; seized the Sudetenland from Czechoslovakia; seized the Slovak state Bohemia and Moravia; and forced Lithuania into ceding the Memel Territory.

In response each time, Europe and the free world tried appeasement and did little to nothing, thereby emboldening Adolf Hitler and dictatorial socialist Germany.

The result? Hitler and Germany invaded Poland, triggering the Holocaust and the deaths of tens of millions of people in World War II.

The question is: Has the world learned from history?

In 2014, Vladimir Putin and Russia invaded Crimea. The free world did little to nothing.

Also in 2014, Vladimir Putin and Russia inspired a rebellion in Donetsk and Lugansk in Ukraine, costing thousands of lives and creating hundreds of thousands of desperate refugees. The free world did little to nothing.

Last month, Russia invaded Ukraine again, apparently seeking the total destruction and conquest of Ukraine. I admire the bravery and kindred spirit of citizens who fight and die for liberty and freedom against overwhelming odds.

They remind me of American Revolutionary War heroes like George Washington and Patrick Henry and places like Valley Forge, Cowpens, Kings Mountain, and Saratoga.

Fortunately, something is different about this Russian attack on Ukraine. This time, the world does not do nothing. This time, the free world is helping Ukraine during their time of peril. This time, time will tell whether the world's help is enough and effective.

First, Europe and America impose economic sanctions on Russia. In that vein, we must learn from Vietnam. Economic sanctions must be all in or all out. There can be no half measures. America must be in this to win or not be in it at all.

Second, Europe and America must be, and are, supplying Ukraine with much-needed tank-killing Javelins, aircraft-destroying Stingers, advanced fighter jets to replace those lost in combat, and other military equipment Ukraine desperately needs.

Third, Europe must decide whether to deploy combat troops. For emphasis, it is my view that America should not even consider providing combat troops in Ukraine unless Europe first does so in significant numbers. Even then, whatever America decides about troop assistance should never go beyond assistance to our European allies.

I, like many Americans, am tired of America spending our Treasury and our lives in so many parts of the globe. It is time for the rest of the free world to step up.

Ukrainians bravely shed themselves of the dictatorial boot in 1991. Russians can, and should, do the same.

My message to the Russian people is this: Your Russian comrades fought side by side with you in World War II against Adolf Hitler and dictatorial socialist Germany. Now, Vladimir Putin forces you to kill each other and die by the thousands in Ukraine. It does not have to be this way. The true way to peace is to do what America regularly does: replace our political leaders.

I urge freedom-loving Russians to bravely stand up and do the same. Do what is necessary to get the leadership Russians want and deserve, and do it before it is too late. That is the lesson of World War II.

## USVI HISTORY MONTH: THEME OF FIRSTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Ms. PLASKETT) for 5 minutes.

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Speaker, let me start by saying that I am a proud Virgin Islander. I stand on the shoulders of strong Virgin Islanders who came before me and who are known for their courage, leadership, sacrifice, and, most importantly, their resilience. We are known for so much more than just white sandy beaches and as a popular vacation destination. We are made of culture-rich lands and a diverse history.

March is Virgin Islands History Month. Though not always pretty, there is great beauty in our past that has shaped the Virgin Islands of our present. Like most Caribbean countries, the Virgin Islands' history, too, begins with the story of pre-Columbian inhabitants of the islands and of slavery.

Almost 3,000 years prior to Christopher Columbus landing in 1493, Native American tribes, such as the Ciboney, the Caribs, and the Arawak Indians, have long inhabited the islands.

In 1493, when Columbus attempted to land on the island that I live on, St. Croix, he was repelled at Salt River,

where he met the Carib Indians who kept him and his troops from landing and making landfall there.

The period of Columbus' visit ultimately set the course for seven other European flags to claim the Virgin Islands and, unfortunately, brought demise to the indigenous people.

Today, they are found on reserved lands, and only for a few islands, and no longer exist in the Virgin Islands.

Much of our global history was built upon slavery and colonization, especially in the Caribbean islands. By the early 1700s, the Virgin Islands was no stranger to enslavement and European colonization.

On the island of St. John, a Ghanaian by the name of Breffu is credited with leading the first and one of the longest-lasting rebellions in the Americas on the island of St. John. She empowered more than 150 enslaved Africans to fight for their freedom and held that island for over 6 months, where the Danes had to bring in the Spanish Armada and the French fleet to get the slaves back in line.

Several years, almost a century, later, in 1848 on the island of St. Croix, slaves led a rebellion, an armed insurrection, which led to the emancipation—15 years before the United States emancipation. The Virgin Islands and Haiti are the only two places to gain freedom through violent overthrow.

The celebration of V.I. Emancipation Day on July 3 marks this day. Virgin Islands' history does not end with just the bleak stories of European colonialism and forced slavery. We have so many celebrated heroes, from individuals who were the founders of San Francisco; Denmark Vesey, who led the rebellion in South Carolina; Hubert Harrison, the great socialist mind who was the thought leader for Marcus Garvey; Edward Wilmoth Blyden, who was the founder of Pan-Africanism; Nella Larsen, one of the Harlem Renaissance writers; Ruby Rouss, who was an aide-de-camp to Eisenhower; Sam Ebbesen, a general and friend of Colin Powell.

Without that history and those individuals, we would not be the Virgin Islands we are today, which I am proud to represent and call my home and my heritage.

Throughout the month of March, let us celebrate our heritage and our history and look to our future.

Happy Virgin Islands History Month.

□ 1015

## HONORING CAROL MCBRIDE PIRSCH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BACON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BACON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Women's History Month and to honor Carol McBride Pirsch, who served 18 years in the Nebraska State legislature, and 8 years on the Douglas County Board of

Commissioners. Through her various roles in Omaha, she has dedicated her time and service to bettering our community.

As an Omaha native, she attended Beals Grade School, Central High School, and the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

One of only three women in the 49 member Nebraska Unicameral, Carol's most notable accomplishments include protecting and informing victims of crime by providing guidance and support to pass the Crime Victims Bill of Rights and the Truth in Sentencing bills.

In 1984 she was the first president of the Nebraska Coalition for Victims of Crime, an organization that established an ongoing statewide coalition for victims of crime, and a fund to establish victim/witness centers in Nebraska.

She also worked to protect homeowners with legislation that prohibited a lien from being placed on a home if contractors failed to pay sub-contractors for their work.

Carol valued the relationships she made while in office and believed most representatives were accessible, respectful, and willing to discuss issues. In the nonpartisan Nebraska Unicameral, she worked together to find solutions and pass bills that would benefit Nebraska statewide.

Active in her community, she was a member of the Omaha Community Committee, the Juvenile Court Nominating Commission, the Mayor's Commission of the Status of Women, Omaha Jaycees, several parent-teacher associations, many women's civic organizations, and the Centris Federal Credit Union Board. She was also involved in the Order of Women Legislators, the Omaha Area Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, the YWCA, the Omaha Library Board, the Developmental Disabilities Council, the Women in Management Association, and the Nebraska Coalition for Victims of Crime. She did it all.

Although retired, Carol has encouraged many to get involved and feels that even if you have retired or are not in public service there are many roles and ways to serve our community.

But above all else, Carol believes her greatest accomplishment is raising her six children alongside her husband Allen, whom she married in 1954. They all earned bachelor's degrees and have additional education certifications and degrees because of the importance placed on education in their family.

Mr. Speaker, I cherish Carol's friendship and I treasure the wisdom she has shared with me and others. I admire this wonderful lady, this great American patriot.

#### STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. GARCIA) for 5 minutes.

Ms. GARCIA of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate President

Biden and the significant accomplishments he shared with us during last night's State of the Union address.

Last year, together with President Biden, we made a promise that Democrats would deliver for the people; and that we have. Thanks to our President's bold leadership and our work in Congress, we have been delivering. Let's look at a few areas.

Jobs, jobs, and more jobs. As was mentioned last night by President Biden, in his first year, 6.7 million jobs were created, marking the strongest year of job growth in history. In my home State of Texas alone more than 37,600 manufacturing jobs were created. These are good, well-paying jobs that are putting Texans back to work. Our economy is on the rise. Wages are strong. The unemployment rate is low.

Another area is our Nation's GDP. While GDP dropped 3.4 percent in 2020, it was able to shoot up to 5.7 percent in 2021—the highest rate since 1984. Simply put, the economy has rebounded during President Biden's first year in office.

Another very important area to all our working families is our public schools. I am proud of the significant progress that has been made in our public schools during the President's first year. We have made huge strides in reopening our schools and keeping them open safely.

One year ago, Mr. Speaker, merely 46 percent of schools were open because it just wasn't safe for teachers, students, and faculty due to COVID. Today, 99.9 percent of schools are safely opened. The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act as well as the American Rescue Plan both provided schools the necessary funds they needed to stay open and make up for lost learning time.

Another very crucial area, vaccination rates. One year ago today, only 15 percent of the U.S. population was fully vaccinated against COVID-19, today that number is 65 percent. The massive increase in vaccinations is the direct result of the President and this Congress' leadership to tackle this virus. Even today we do not have to wear our masks this morning.

Let's look ahead. Action from the Biden administration and Congress has already resulted in significant progress on the supply chain challenges. The bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act will improve and protect supply chains and reduce reliance on foreign oil immensely for years to come. It will help lower costs and inflation rates with time. As President Biden said last night, the plan is to lower your costs, not your wages.

There is a lot more President Biden and Democrats are working on in building a better America, like investments in affordable childcare and paid and universal pre-K that would allow more working families to participate in the economy.

It is those very workers and everyday hardworking Americans who deserve the greatest praise of all.

Our hometown heroes have braved through this pandemic and powered through many challenges. They have been the muscle and the backbone of our Nation's record-breaking economic growth and recovery from the pandemic and we thank them.

With President Biden's leadership, Congress' partnership, and the support of the American people, there is truly no limit as to what we can achieve together in building a better America.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I would like to tell the people of Ukraine that we stand with them. I stand with them. "Yes, we can," "si se puede." I want the people of Ukraine to know that we see you, we hear you, and we love you. And Russia, who has purposely invaded your homeland has been—well, I should not say the word I really want to say on the floor—but they have been inhumane, cruel, and just beyond the pale. We will not stand for this.

We will stand with Ukraine. Again, "yes, we can," "si se puede." We stand with you.

#### TRIBUTE TO AL GLICK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. WALBERG) for 5 minutes.

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to my good friend, Al Glick, who recently passed away at the age of 95. Very few have meant as much to the Jackson, Michigan, community as Al Glick.

Alro Steel, a company founded nearly 75 years ago, embodies the hardworking ethos of his hometown. Over the years, under Al's leadership, the company grew to 3,000 employees in over a dozen States. Al always exhibited a tireless work ethic but spent the time to talk to and to know each of his employees. When asked about his retirement, he said: "I have slowed down to working part-time, I only work 12 hours a day." Even still, he always found time to get involved in just about every effort under the sun.

Al supported skilled education programs, nonprofits, and C.S. Mott Children's Hospital, just to name a few. Name a sport and Al likely sponsored a team or league in the Jackson area. Al's generosity was felt throughout the Jackson community, often taking shape through his unwavering support of Jackson High School.

A Michigan man through and through, Al got to see his beloved Wolverines take down Ohio State on a snowy day this past November and then win the Big Ten Championship.

Al wasn't just a staple of the Jackson community; he was a steel pillar.

While we mourn Al's passing, we celebrate his remarkable life and the legacy that will live on for generations to come. We wish his family great joy in that legacy and thank them for sharing Al with us.

## RECOGNIZING SHELTON JOHNSON

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PORTER) for 5 minutes.

Ms. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an amazing Californian, Mr. Shelton Johnson. I commend his contributions to the National Park Service and his dedication to telling the stories of our history that often go untold.

Mr. JOHNSON has worked as a park ranger for over 35 years. In that time, he has enthusiastically recounted the special contributions of Black Americans to preserving Yosemite's wilderness. The all-Black 9th and 10th Cavalry Regiments, known as the Buffalo Soldiers, were among the first park rangers, even before the founding of the National Park system.

I am inspired by Mr. JOHNSON's creativity and commitment to sharing our diverse history. Mr. JOHNSON was recently awarded the American Park Experience Award for his lifelong efforts in helping more families and youth feel welcome as they see their stories told.

As a fellow teacher and mom to three enthusiastic, park-loving kids, I am honored to recognize him today.

## COMPETITION IN CAPITALISM

Ms. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, a strong capitalist economy requires competition. Weak antitrust enforcement has atrophied the bones of our economy. When our economy lacks competition, we see prices go up, wages drop, and innovation stall.

Last year, my office released a report detailing how Big Pharma's market consolidation creates real harms for families. Too many Americans can't afford lifesaving prescription drugs because Big Pharma buys out its competitors so that it can continue its corporate abuse.

We have also seen how Big Tech's market consolidation reduces consumer choice, stifles competition, and harms small businesses.

Competition is central to healthy capitalism. Reining in corporate greed, holding big businesses accountable, and cracking down on monopolies will strengthen our economy.

Congress must tackle market consolidation to create a level playing field for all businesses and to strengthen our capitalist economy.

## STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CLINE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CLINE. Mr. Speaker, last night President Biden tried to paint his administration in a positive light during the State of the Union address, but the American people know better.

We are facing an unprecedented number of crises: an economic crisis, a border crisis, a crime crisis, an energy crisis, and an unprecedented national security crisis. Every one of these crises have been either created or made worse

by President Biden and congressional Democrats.

Simply put, Democrats own these crises, but I am sure—and we did see—an attempt by President Biden to dress up these disasters and highlight victories that simply don't exist.

While President Biden tries to take credit for accomplishments he had no responsibility in delivering, House Republicans remain committed to showcasing to the American people what we stand for: unleashing American energy independence, peace through strength, respecting the Constitution, putting power back in the hands of parents, lowering taxes, balancing budgets, and securing our southern border.

Mr. Speaker, if given the opportunity, Republicans will lead on these issues, and I look forward to delivering on the day that that happens.

## SUPPORT FOR UKRAINE

Mr. CLINE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my support to the people of Ukraine. All Americans stand in solidarity against Russian aggression, and we pray for peace.

However, as the conflict escalates and we call for not one more drop of Russian oil to be imported into this Nation, the United States must make energy independence a priority.

Prior to the invasion, gas here at home was already 40 percent higher than it was 12 months ago, marking an 8-year high. Now, as the world sanctions Russia, prices are climbing yet again, and experts predict Americans could soon be paying more than \$5 for a gallon of gas.

In response, the President announced that he is releasing 30 million barrels from the U.S. strategic oil reserves. It sounds great, but considering the United States uses more than 20 million barrels a day, this is nothing more than a gimmick. A day-and-a-half worth of oil is not going to reduce costs for American businesses, workers, and families in my district.

There must be a comprehensive plan that leads us back to the energy independence we enjoyed during the Trump administration, and it starts with lifting the President's moratorium on new oil and gas drilling on public lands, exploring in ANWR and off our coasts, and finishing the Keystone XL pipeline.

□ 1030

## RECOGNIZING THE CAVE SPRING CHEERLEADING TEAM

Mr. CLINE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the student athletes on the Cave Spring High School cheerleading team in Roanoke, Virginia, for winning its division's State championship toward the end of last year. The Knights cheerleading squad is often referred to as a dynasty, and this victory marks the team's fourth State title in 9 years—and in those other 5 years they placed second each time.

The team had to overcome several obstacles this season, but through it

all they persevered. Cave Spring senior cheerleader, Abby Holbrook, said it best when she said: "We work so hard during the season, and it feels like all the hard work is paying off."

Yes, Abby's hard work certainly did pay off. With the graduating class of 2022 having won the title their freshman and senior years, they are proud of the legacy they leave behind, and rightly so.

Congratulations to Cave Spring on this accomplishment, and I wish them the best of luck again next season.

## STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ROY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. ROY. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to follow my friend from Virginia (Mr. CLINE).

Mr. Speaker, last night when we heard the President of the United States address this Nation and this body in this Chamber as well as our colleagues on the other side of the Capitol in the Senate, you would think there was some sort of magic moment that the virus has suddenly left the Earth and now all of a sudden we are free here on the floor of the House of Representatives to be without masks.

It was just coincidentally timed—just coincidentally timed—when the State of the Union is upon us. A number of States have lifted their mandates—all suddenly coincidentally timed—around the State of the Union. And I was interested in watching the Speaker of the House suddenly saying: Well, it is a new moment in COVID.

I listened to my colleagues from Texas just a moment ago on the other side of the aisle talking about how we have had this great victory through the action of the genius of our Federal Government to free us from the perils of this virus.

Mr. Speaker, tell that to the children who have been sitting in the corners of classrooms wearing masks. Tell that to the members of our military and the members of our Border Patrol who are the so-called heroes. I say so-called because my Democratic colleagues a year ago were calling healthcare workers heroes, and now they are forcing them still to lose their job if they don't take a jab because of the wisdom of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle that they know best. They know best.

The President stood there arrogantly in that posture preaching to the United States public and to this body yesterday and talked about how we are going to beat this virus and oh, by the way, suddenly magically we need to fund the police. Go back and look at every statement that has been made by my colleagues on the other side of the aisle over the last 2 years talking about defunding the police. We know who is defunding the police across the country, and it sure as heck isn't Republicans. It is Democrats across this country.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle know it. The President knows it, and the President is reading polls. The President knows that the approach to the virus has been devastating to the American people. Lockdowns, mask mandates, and vaccine mandates are being rejected by the American people. The polls show it, so the magic moment has then arrived.

The President of the United States knows full well when he says the border should be secured that it is a lie. I just want to be very clear: when the President said last night that the border should be secure, it is a lie. He is lying to the American people.

I was in Del Rio just last week. One thousand people a day are coming across that river, and nobody gives a whit. And they don't give a whit about the 26 migrants who have died in the Rio Grande since October 1, since the cameras have left the Haitians sitting on the Rio Grande. They don't care that there are 26 dead migrants. They don't care about the 119 bodies in Brooks County where the sheriff has to bring a body trailer to Brooks County.

They don't care about the fences getting cut and the livestock getting out. The ranchers I met with last week in south Texas are in tears about their property. No. No. The President gets up, gives a speech, and declares the border secure and all is well.

Then he gets up and talks about the solidarity of the Ukrainian people, yet he refuses to unleash American oil and gas and refuses to unleash natural gas, liquified natural gas, that would change the world. He refuses to stop importing 600,000 barrels of Russian oil every single day because we won't unleash American oil and gas.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we are going to keep telling the truth about the border. We are going to keep telling the truth about vaccine mandates. We are going to keep telling the truth about the need for American energy. We are not going to bow down to the climate hysterics and the false lies about border security that are endangering the American people.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President.

#### THE RETIREMENT OF ROB GREEN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) for 5 minutes.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to salute a dedicated public servant and friend. After working for a series of Members of the House, including Representative Bill Goodling, Rob Green first served the Education and Workforce Committee from 1995 to 2001. Rob rejoined the committee 4 years ago and was an invaluable leader of the GOP workforce team until his recent retirement.

As director of workforce policy, Rob worked tirelessly to protect the rights

of workers and employers alike. He has dedicated years of his life to fighting for free market principles and to seeing that our country stays a self-governed republic. Whether we have been in the majority or in the minority, Rob has made addressing Federal overreach a top priority and has never been afraid to hold Federal agencies accountable.

Rob's consummate professionalism when working with Members of Congress as well as Democrat staff allowed us to pass bipartisan bills such as the Retirement Improvement and Savings Enhancement Act, RISE, which will help many Americans prepare for a more secure future.

Rob's work was also pivotal in helping us pass a ban on surprise billing. This fight for transparency in our medical system has been a passion of Rob's and will help millions of struggling Americans.

Rob's influence extended way beyond the committee. GOP leadership also relied on Rob to shape policy in the labor arena, ensuring that the American worker's voice gets heard. His relationship with lawmakers and staff throughout the House allowed the committee to flourish and accomplish a tremendous amount.

Too often populist lobbies have an out-sized influence over politics in Washington. Rob's work on this committee ensured that the voices of job creators and small business owners were heard.

This is a difficult day for me as I relied on Rob's expertise and keen eye for strategy to further this committee's mission. Thankfully, his expertise will live on in the team that he has led and mentored for 4 years.

Mr. Speaker, I commend Rob for his many accomplishments and for his selfless service to this country. It is because of dedicated public servants like Rob standing in the gap and defending our Republic that we have a chance at reclaiming the vision our Founding Fathers had for this Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I truly congratulate Rob on his retirement. He has earned it.

#### PRESIDENT BIDEN'S NATIONAL SECURITY CRISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROSE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. ROSE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address President Biden's national security crisis and to express my support for the people of Ukraine as they fight for their lives and their sovereignty.

An American ally is under attack, and they need our support. Sanctioning the Russian economy is not enough. The Ukrainian Government has requested more lethal aid for many months, and we must deliver it without further delay. We must also end our purchases of nearly 538,000 barrels of Russian oil each day and return to where we were just a short year ago by

making America energy independent again.

After 4 years of peace and prosperity, it only took President Biden 400 days to unravel it all. President Biden's weakness on the world stage has emboldened our enemies and created a vacuum that Vladimir Putin is delighted to fill.

President Biden has demonstrated the inability to lead, whether it be the botched Afghanistan withdrawal or the invasion that is happening at our own Southern border. I can't help but think about what might come next as Iran strives to produce nuclear weapons and China may look toward Taiwan and mimic Russia. The world was a much safer place a little over a year ago.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to stand with President Zelensky and the people of Ukraine who are courageously fighting against power-hungry dictator Vladimir Putin.

So much tragedy and loss could have been avoided in Ukraine if we had any real leadership in the White House. Surely evil triumphs when good men do nothing.

#### CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF JIM LANCASTER

Mr. ROSE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate the life of my friend, cousin, and lifelong Tennessean, Jim Lancaster. He passed away on February 3 after a remarkable 92 years on God's Earth.

Jim loved the Lord and cherished his family with all his heart. He and Vondell, the love of his life, were married for 67 years. Together they had five children, 12 grandchildren, 18 great-grandchildren, and two great-great-grandchildren. Obviously, Jim's and Vondell's loving marriage and devotion to family led to a lot of little Lancasters running around middle Tennessee.

Jim was a joyful role model, and so many people in his community knew Jim in that way. He served as a leader in many local organizations including the chamber of commerce, the Boy Scouts, and too many to name here today. He received loads of awards for his service over the years, but he was a humble man who wasn't in it for recognition. He just loved serving his community and the people in it.

He also dedicated much of his life to agriculture. He graduated from Tennessee Tech, my alma mater, with a degree in agriculture, and then worked for the Wilson County Farm Bureau as its agency manager for over 43 years. In fact, he is now a member of the Wilson County Agricultural Hall of Fame in recognition of his exemplary work for local farmers throughout his distinguished career.

I was blessed to call Jim family. It is bittersweet. It is a bittersweet moment for me now to say he is gone to be with our Lord.

Thank you, Jim Lancaster, for a life well-lived that touched so many in such a positive way.

## THON

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor, thank, and express my sincerest gratitude for an incredible group of students at the Pennsylvania State University—Penn State.

On February 18 at 4 p.m., Penn State students, staff, family, friends, volunteers, and spectators filled the Bryce Jordan Center for the 50th Penn State IFC/Panhellenic Dance Marathon, more widely known as THON, to raise money for the Four Diamonds Foundation.

Since 1973, student volunteers have come together at Penn State to raise money for the Penn State Health Children's Hospital. In 1977, THON partnered with the Four Diamonds Foundation, and since then not a single Four Diamonds family has received a medical bill thanks to the tireless work and dedication of Penn State students.

The Four Diamonds was founded by Charles and Irma Millard in 1972 after their son, Christopher, lost his battle with cancer at age 11. Before Christopher passed away, he wrote a story about a great knight who sought out the four diamonds of courage, wisdom, honesty, and strength to be saved from an evil sorceress. His parents realized those four qualities were all necessary to overcome cancer, and they created the Four Diamonds Fund in his memory.

Mr. Millard passed away in November of 2021 at the age of 93, but his legacy through THON and his foundation will no doubt live on forever.

Over the past 50 years, THON has grown into the largest student-run philanthropy in the world. In the first year, 78 students danced for 30 hours straight and raised just over \$2,000. Today, THON is a 46-hour no sitting, no sleeping dance marathon celebrating nearly 17,000 students' yearlong fundraising efforts to help end childhood cancer.

Thankfully, after a virtual event last year, 667 dancers and tens of thousands of student volunteers and supporters attended the event in-person. Students stood from 6 p.m. on Friday, February 18, until 4 p.m. on Sunday, February 20. While it was an impressive feat to hold, what is even more incredible is the drive, fortitude, and flexibility these students showed in their commitment to this cause.

This past year, the pandemic prohibited students from hosting many of their traditional bake sales, ribbon sales, or other fundraisers that Pennsylvanians have been accustomed to seeing throughout the Commonwealth. Despite this, THON shattered previous fundraising records by bringing in more than \$13.7 million for the kids.

□ 1045

Over the last 50 years, THON has now donated more than \$200 million to Four

Diamonds Fund, undoubtedly saving hundreds of lives.

While it is no easy feat to stand for 46 hours, the real highlight of this event comes on Sunday afternoon, shortly before the event concludes. During what is known as Family Hour, THON invites Four Diamonds families onto the stage to share their experiences with the Children's Hospital, Four Diamonds, and THON.

This year, Jacquie Homan shared the story of how her son was diagnosed with synovial cell sarcoma at age 2. Thanks to Penn State Children's Hospital, Declan is officially 5 years cancer-free, and Jacquie said that the support from the THON community had an immeasurable impact on helping their family cope with and move forward from this diagnosis.

I am inspired by Declan and every other child and family who find themselves battling cancer and am in awe of their strength and their spirit as they keep fighting.

I am also proud of the Penn State students who continue to be so committed to this cause. And I am incredibly proud of the work done by the Four Diamonds Foundation and Penn State Children's Hospital as they conduct lifesaving research and ensure no family ever receives a bill.

Congratulations, once again, to everyone involved in this year's THON.

## RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 46 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

## AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

## PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Margaret Grun Kibben, offered the following prayer:

Holy God, we return to You this day. With our whole hearts, we approach You.

On this day, some fast that they would satisfy their hunger only with Your word. Others weep, ashamed of the choices they have made which have distanced themselves from You. And still more mourn, grieving the loss of Your loving embrace.

Be merciful to us, O God. Be slow to anger. Show us Your grace that we would enjoy again Your steadfast love.

Then spare Your people. Let no one say, "Where is our God?" Have pity on those who cry out to You this day.

Remove the enemies from those who call on Your name and walk in Your

way. May Your children no longer fear. In Your redemption, may they once again find reason to rejoice.

Praise be to you, O Lord our God. You are in the midst of us. We call upon Your most holy name. Hear our prayer.

Amen.

## THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to section 11(a) of House Resolution 188, the Journal of the last day's proceedings is approved.

## PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from North Carolina (Ms. ROSS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. ROSS led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

## ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 further requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

TRIPLE-NEGATIVE BREAST  
CANCER AWARENESS DAY

(Mr. MORELLE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MORELLE. Madam Speaker, six years ago this month, I heard the phrase triple-negative breast cancer for the first time in my life. I was in the oncologist's office with my newly diagnosed 29-year-old daughter, Lauren, a day forever etched in my memory.

In the weeks that followed, I learned a great deal about this very aggressive, rare form of breast cancer. Roughly 12 percent of breast cancer survivors are designated as triple-negative.

It is the only form of breast cancer that doesn't respond to hormone therapy, often requiring chemotherapy instead. And it claims the lives of thousands of women and men each year. It stole Lauren from our family in August of 2017.

Tomorrow, March 3, is Triple-Negative Breast Cancer Awareness Day. I am humbled to sponsor a resolution to call attention to this awful disease and to let the thousands of victims of triple-negative breast cancer know they are not alone.

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Mr. Adrian Swann, one of his secretaries.

## AN ANXIOUS WORLD

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, the State of the Union last night was a disconnect from the reality of Biden failures. The Wall Street Journal is correct. He missed the moment.

The paper went further to describe what Biden did not say: More defense spending to meet the threats from autocrats? No. A new appreciation of the contribution of fossil fuels to American and European security? Not a word. A note that government spending contributed to the highest inflation rate in 40 years? Nope.

I personally was disappointed that there was no mention of leaving Americans behind in Afghanistan, 13 patriots murdered in Kabul. And now Afghanistan is a safe haven for terrorists who can come across the open border to attack American families.

An anxious world is looking for American leadership in a dangerous new era. I hope the President will change course for peace through strength.

In conclusion, God bless Ukraine. God save Ukraine. Long live President Volodymyr Zelensky.

## AMERICA'S EXCELLENCE IN SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING

(Ms. PELOSI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, last night we heard the President of the United States speak with great enthusiasm about our friendship with the people of Ukraine and how we have shared values in terms of democracy, in terms of sovereignty, and in terms of not having someone come into their country and usurp their freedom.

President Biden also spoke about America's freedom in the world in terms of our independence in terms of our own investments in our economic future. America's excellence in science and engineering has long been the envy of the world. Along the way other countries have copied our model, investing in education and research and took over some of the manufacturing of our supply.

We have, what was referenced by the President last night, legislation, we call it the America COMPETES Act in the House of Representatives. It is a blueprint for our independence and our self-sufficiency economically in the world.

With the House-passed America COMPETES Act we do three things. First of all, we invest in chips, \$52 billion in chips and semiconductors. Do you know how many chips are in a car? There are 1,000; and in an electric car, 2,000. In order for our auto manufacturers to continue to create jobs and create products, we need chips. \$52 billion.

Secondly, we reinvigorate our manufacturing base by addressing the supply chain issues. Supply chain increases supply, reducing costs, lowering inflation. This is very important. There is \$48 billion invested there.

Third, we invest in research and education into stem cell so we can diversify the workforce to include many more people, everyone in our country, as we advance science and technology and good-paying jobs for the future.

Again, we are prepared to go into conference with the Senate on this legislation. We are always ready to fight for the people. We expect to have this legislation before too long, and when we do so we will be lowering costs, increasing paychecks, and doing so for the people.

## RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF DR. RAY FARLEY

(Mr. CARTER of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the life of Dr. Ray Farley, the former president of Young Harris College.

Dr. Farley was a long-time supporter of Young Harris College, with 35 years of dedicated service to Young Harris under his belt.

Beginning as a professor of history in 1955, Dr. Farley worked with the college until his retirement in 1991, after serving as the college president for 20 years. For some of those years I was a student at Young Harris College while Dr. Farley was the president. I got to know him well. He was a fine gentleman and did an excellent job.

During his tenure as president, Dr. Farley made it his mission to modernize and expand the services and facilities at Young Harris. He was responsible for taking important steps to strengthen the college endowment, faculty, curriculum, and facilities.

Dr. Farley implemented his plan for helping to beautify the campus as well by renovating dining facilities, resident halls, and administrative buildings. The years with Dr. Farley at the helm were integral to the growth and development of the college itself.

In April of 2021, Dr. Farley was awarded the Outstanding Friend Award by the Young Harris College Alumni Association for his incredible dedication and service to the college. His legacy and impact will be felt for many years to come.

Mr. Speaker, I send my condolences to his family and friends as well as the whole Young Harris community.

## RUSSIA'S ASSAULT ON UKRAINE

(Ms. ROSS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. ROSS. Mr. Speaker, Russia's assault on Ukrainian freedom and democracy is an assault on freedom and de-

mocracy everywhere. That is why America and our allies are linking arms and engaging in unprecedented cooperation. President Biden has marshalled the world to impose severe consequences on Putin and the Russian economy.

Because of these crippling sanctions, Russia now stands at the precipice of a punishing financial crisis. American troops, many from Fort Bragg and elsewhere in North Carolina, are already in NATO countries in Eastern Europe, and more are on their way.

The international community is also sending support to countries neighboring Ukraine, including North Carolina's close partner, Moldova. As we continue to work on a robust new aid package, the prayers and admiration of the people of my district are with the brave Ukrainian freedom fighters risking their lives to defend their homeland.

## AMERICA FIRST MEANS POWER UNDER CONTROL

(Mr. CAWTHORN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CAWTHORN. Mr. Speaker, when the United States military shows up, kings and kingdoms fall to their knees. As the great philosopher Toby Keith once said, "We put a boot in their ass, it's the American way." Our military preeminence is unmatched, our brand is dominance. But our greatness lies in temperance. America first means power under control.

Overzealous executives have wrenched away a precious power bestowed on this body. I am here to remind them: Congress declares war, not Joe Biden, not some woke general. Congress, the people, must debate, decide, and then, if absolutely necessary, declare war.

The Constitution is our compass, not the feelings of some bought-off military-industrial complex war hawk who uses emotion to justify America's entry into every overseas conflict. Congress must reclaim our power to declare war, and if we do declare, we must define what victory looks like. The sons and daughters of America are too precious to waste on the altar of globalism.

America first, always and forever.

## SOCIAL SECURITY AND OUR ELDERLY

(Mr. LARSON of Connecticut asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, more than 900,000 people in the United States have lost their lives due to COVID. Of those more than 900,000, 660,000 people over age 65 have been lost because of COVID. This is the same population that was not only worried and concerned about COVID, but they are the ones on a fixed income. They are the ones that rely on Social Security.



More than 5 million of our fellow Americans get a below-poverty-level check from Social Security after having paid in all their lives to the number one insurance program in the country, the number one anti-poverty program for the elderly, and the number one anti-poverty program for children. Help is on the way.

Social Security 2100, a sacred trust, as the President called it, is a bill that will uplift and raise people out of the depths of poverty and provide them with the sustenance they need in their daily lives, as Roosevelt intended.

#### RUSSIA'S ASSAULT ON UKRAINE

(Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak in strong support of the people of Ukraine and against the thuggish, criminal, and careless actions of the Russian military and President Putin.

Last week's invasion of Ukraine by Russia was planned and premeditated. It was, and still is, a blatant act of war and cannot be tolerated by the international community. Putin's actions have been those of a desperate politician creating chaos in neighboring countries due to low popularity at home.

As we have seen on the news and social media, the Russian military is making no distinction between military and civilian, launching missiles blindly into Ukrainian cities and towns.

With their backs against the wall, the people of Ukraine have shown the world that they will fight to defend their friends, family, homes, and country. We must support them and the democratically-elected Ukrainian Government.

The current sanctions that the administration has levied against Russia, Putin, and his cronies are welcome, but we clearly need to go further. We must aggressively hurt the Russian economy by cutting off their energy exports and halt the purchasing of Russian gas and oil by the United States. We should also unleash American energy, including biofuels, natural gas, and wind, to help our allies move away from Russian energy reliance.

Mr. Speaker, to the people of Ukraine, we are with you today, tomorrow, and always.

□ 1215

#### INVESTMENTS IN INFRASTRUCTURE

(Mr. CARTWRIGHT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, as we heard last night in the President's State of the Union, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act is a once-in-a-

lifetime investment in our Nation's economic foundation and our Nation's competitiveness.

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act makes it possible for us to invest in passenger rail expansion and restoration; rebuild our roads, our bridges, our water systems, and our sewer systems; reclaim abandoned mine lands and reduce pollution; and so much more. It is the solution to improving our competitiveness on the world stage and recovering from the devastating COVID-19 pandemic.

After years of talking about passing an infrastructure bill and week after week of infrastructure weeks, we have finally done it. We will begin seeing the benefits quite soon.

Thank God for the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

#### HONORING HUNTINGTON BEACH POLICE OFFICER NICHOLAS VELLA

(Mrs. STEEL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. STEEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Huntington Beach Police Officer Nicholas Vella who was tragically killed in a crash while responding to a call in Newport Beach on February 19.

Officer Vella served as a law enforcement officer for 18 years and spent 14 years with the Huntington Beach Police Department. He dedicated his life to protecting our community. My heart goes out to his wife and daughter, the Huntington Beach Police Department, and all who loved and knew Officer Vella.

I am so thankful every day for our brave law enforcement officers. They put their lives on the line for us, and I am so grateful for their service and sacrifice. I want to thank their families, too, because their sacrifice does not go unnoticed.

I will be praying for Officer Vella and his family.

#### SUPPLY CHAINS

(Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the bipartisan supply chain subtitle found in the House-passed America COMPETES Act.

We have all heard from our constituents over the last several months about the impact that inflation has had on households and businesses. We also know that a key reason for rising prices on critical goods is our supply chain instability. The supply chain subtitle in the America COMPETES Act will strengthen our supply chains and ultimately tackle a root cause of inflation.

It is vital that this subtitle is preserved through the negotiations of the America COMPETES Act as we build a

better America. This is about creating good-paying union jobs, protecting our national security, and, ultimately, protecting the pocketbooks of the American people. Let's get it done.

#### ACKNOWLEDGING PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT ERIC BARRON

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the distinguished career of Penn State University President Eric Barron.

President Barron assumed office in 2014 after leaving his post as president at the Florida State University. But his service to the university began when Dr. Barron served as dean of the College of Earth and Minerals Sciences and founding director of the Earth System Science Center in Penn State.

In his tenure as president of Penn State University, President Barron elevated Penn State as a leader in higher education. President Barron has also worked to support State funding, increase access and affordability to students through scholarship programs, and prepare students graduating from Penn State for success after college.

In my time working with President Barron, he has always made it a point to meet with the Pennsylvania Congressional Delegation regularly and share Penn State's vision, work, and culture. He took the time to build meaningful relationships which ultimately benefited the university and the Commonwealth as a whole. I am happy to call him my friend and wish him well in his retirement.

Mr. Speaker, Penn State remains one of the top institutions in the country in part because of the work of President Barron. He leaves a great legacy behind.

I thank President Barron for his service, and I wish him joy in his retirement.

#### WOMEN'S RIGHT TO CHOOSE

(Mr. RYAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RYAN. Mr. Speaker, I am frustrated. We have heard a lot this week about cutting workers in on the deal and how we meet the challenges that this Nation is facing.

Every piece of the game plan—whether it is helping take on China; how do we bring jobs back to places like Ohio; how do we increase union membership by making it easier to join a union; how do we bring down costs; and how do we cut taxes for workers in the midst of all of this inflation—every one of those bills has gone to the Senate and either died or is on life support.

Here is one example of just how broken this is: Last year, we made history



when we passed the Women's Health Protection Act—and not a moment too soon as *Roe v. Wade* hangs in the balance and States like Ohio race to pass new laws to ban abortion. This is a basic right, a matter of settled law. But this week the Senate blocked the vote—blocked it—and we didn't even get a vote.

It is time to get rid of the filibuster and make sure that the bills we send here from the House actually get passed in the United States Senate.

#### CARING FOR OUR VETERANS

(Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 3967, the Honoring our PACT Act, which will ensure comprehensive benefits and care for our troops who suffer from toxic exposure, especially from burn pits. I want to thank Chairman TAKANO for his leadership on this bill. It is something we should all support. It supports our veterans.

As the daughter of a veteran, the sister of a veteran, and the wife of a veteran, caring for our veterans is extremely important to me, as it should be to every American. I could not help but be struck by the similarities between this bill and the 9/11 health and compensation bill which served and supported our heroes and heroines of 9/11 who likewise were exposed to burning toxins that later gave them cancers and severe illness.

This bill could help over 3 million veterans who are currently suffering from exposure to toxic burn pits.

Whether a veteran has served in Afghanistan, Iraq, or elsewhere, if they were exposed to these toxic hazards, they are entitled to care. They were there for us; we should be there for them. We should all support this important bill.

#### REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 2748

Mr. BOWMAN. Mr. Speaker, I seek recognition to remove myself as cosponsor of H.R. 2748.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. YARMUTH). The gentleman's request is approved.

#### HONORING OUR PROMISE TO ADDRESS COMPREHENSIVE TOXICS ACT OF 2021

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 950, I call up the bill (H.R. 3967) to improve health care and benefits for veterans exposed to toxic substances, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 950, an amend-

ment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 117-33, modified by the amendment printed in part A of House Report 117-253, is adopted and the bill, as amended, is considered read.

The text of the bill, as amended, is as follows:

H.R. 3967

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; REFERENCES TO TITLE 38, UNITED STATES CODE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) *SHORT TITLE.*—This Act may be cited as the “Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act of 2021” or the “Honoring our PACT Act of 2021”.

(b) *MATTERS RELATING TO AMENDMENTS TO TITLE 38, UNITED STATES CODE.*—

(1) *REFERENCES.*—Except as otherwise expressly provided, when in this Act an amendment or repeal is expressed in terms of an amendment to, or repeal of, a section or other provision, the reference shall be considered to be made to a section or other provision of title 38, United States Code.

(2) *AMENDMENTS TO TABLES OF CONTENTS.*—Except as otherwise expressly provided, when an amendment made by this Act to title 38, United States Code, adds a section or larger organizational unit to that title or amends the designation or heading of a section or larger organizational unit in that title, that amendment also shall have the effect of amending any table of sections in that title to alter the table to conform to the changes made by the amendment.

(c) *TABLE OF CONTENTS.*—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; references to title 38, United States Code; table of contents.

#### TITLE I—EXPANSION OF HEALTH CARE ELIGIBILITY

##### Subtitle A—Toxic-exposed Veterans

Sec. 101. Short title.

Sec. 102. Definitions relating to toxic-exposed veterans.

Sec. 103. Expansion of health care for specific categories of toxic-exposed veterans and veterans supporting certain overseas contingency operations.

Sec. 104. Assessments of implementation and operation.

##### Subtitle B—Certain Veterans of Combat Service

Sec. 111. Expansion of period of eligibility for health care for certain veterans of combat service.

#### TITLE II—TOXIC EXPOSURE PRESUMPTION PROCESS

Sec. 201. Short title.

Sec. 202. Improvements to ability of Department of Veterans Affairs to establish presumptions of service connection based on toxic exposure.

Sec. 203. Reevaluation of claims for compensation involving presumptions of service connection.

#### TITLE III—IMPROVING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SERVICE CONNECTION PROCESS FOR TOXIC-EXPOSED VETERANS

Sec. 301. Short title.

Sec. 302. Presumptions of toxic exposure.

Sec. 303. Medical nexus examinations for toxic exposure risk activities.

#### TITLE IV—PRESUMPTIONS OF SERVICE CONNECTION

Sec. 401. Treatment of veterans who participated in cleanup of Enewetak Atoll as radiation-exposed veterans for purposes of presumption of service connection of certain disabilities by Department of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 402. Treatment of veterans who participated in nuclear response near Palomares, Spain, or Thule, Greenland, as radiation-exposed veterans for purposes of presumption of service connection of certain disabilities by Department of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 403. Presumptions of service connection for diseases associated with exposures to certain herbicide agents for veterans who served in certain locations.

Sec. 404. Addition of additional diseases associated with exposure to certain herbicide agents for which there is a presumption of service connection for veterans who served in certain locations.

Sec. 405. Improving compensation for disabilities occurring in Persian Gulf War veterans.

Sec. 406. Presumption of service connection for certain diseases associated with exposure to burn pits and other toxins.

#### TITLE V—RESEARCH MATTERS

Sec. 501. Coordination by Department of Veterans Affairs of toxic exposure research.

Sec. 502. Data collection, analysis, and report on treatment of veterans for illnesses related to toxic exposure.

Sec. 503. Studies related to veterans who served in Southwest Asia and certain other locations.

Sec. 504. Study on health trends of post 9/11 veterans.

Sec. 505. Study on cancer rates among veterans.

Sec. 506. Study on feasibility and advisability of furnishing hospital care and medical services to dependents of veterans who participated in toxic exposure risk activities.

#### TITLE VI—IMPROVEMENT OF RESOURCES AND TRAINING REGARDING TOXIC-EXPOSED VETERANS

Sec. 601. Short title; definitions.

Sec. 602. Publication of list of resources of Department of Veterans Affairs for toxic-exposed veterans and outreach program for such veterans and caregivers and survivors of such veterans.

Sec. 603. Incorporation of toxic exposure questionnaire during primary care appointments.

Sec. 604. Training for personnel of the Department of Veterans Affairs with respect to toxic-exposed veterans.

#### TITLE VII—REGISTRIES, RECORDS, AND OTHER MATTERS

Sec. 701. Registry of individuals exposed to per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances on military installations.

Sec. 702. Fort McClellan Health Registry.

Sec. 703. Independent study on Individual Longitudinal Exposure Record.

Sec. 704. Biannual report on Individual Longitudinal Exposure Record.

Sec. 705. Correction of exposure records by members of the Armed Forces and veterans.

Sec. 706. Federal cause of action relating to water at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina.

Sec. 7\_\_\_\_. Veterans toxic exposures fund.

#### TITLE I—EXPANSION OF HEALTH CARE ELIGIBILITY

##### Subtitle A—Toxic-exposed Veterans

#### SEC. 101. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Conceding Our Veterans’ Exposures Now And Necessitating Training Act” or the “COVENANT Act”.

**SEC. 102. DEFINITIONS RELATING TO TOXIC-EXPOSED VETERANS.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 1710(a)(2)(F) is amended by striking “who was exposed to a toxic substance, radiation, or other conditions, as provided in subsection (e)” and inserting “in accordance with subsection (e), who is a toxic-exposed veteran”.

(b) **DEFINITIONS OF TOXIC EXPOSURE AND TOXIC-EXPOSED VETERAN.**—Section 101 is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraphs:

“(37) The term ‘toxic exposure’ includes the following:

“(A) A toxic exposure risk activity, as defined in section 1710(e)(4) of this title.

“(B) An exposure to a substance, chemical, or airborne hazard identified in the list under section 1119(b)(2) of this title.

“(38) The term ‘toxic-exposed veteran’ means a veteran described in section 1710(e)(1) of this title.”.

(c) **DEFINITION OF TOXIC EXPOSURE RISK ACTIVITY.**—Section 1710(e)(4) is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(C) The term ‘toxic exposure risk activity’ means any activity—

“(i) that requires a corresponding entry in an exposure tracking record system (as defined in section 1119(c) of this title) for the veteran who carried out the activity; or

“(ii) that the Secretary determines qualifies for purposes of this subsection when taking into account what is reasonably prudent to protect the health of veterans.”.

**SEC. 103. EXPANSION OF HEALTH CARE FOR SPECIFIC CATEGORIES OF TOXIC-EXPOSED VETERANS AND VETERANS SUPPORTING CERTAIN OVERSEAS CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—

(1) **EXPANSION.**—Subsection (e) of section 1710, as amended by section 102(c), is further amended—

(A) in paragraph (1), by adding at the end the following new subparagraphs:

“(G) Beginning not later than the applicable date specified in paragraph (6), and subject to paragraph (2), a veteran who participated in a toxic exposure risk activity while serving on active duty, active duty for training, or inactive duty training is eligible for hospital care, medical services, and nursing home care under subsection (a)(2)(F) for any illness.

“(H) Beginning not later than the applicable date specified in paragraph (6), and subject to paragraph (2), a covered veteran (as defined in section 1119(c) of this title) is eligible for hospital care, medical services, and nursing home care under subsection (a)(2)(F) for any illness.

“(I)(i) Beginning not later than the applicable date specified in paragraph (6), and subject to paragraph (2), a veteran who deployed in support of a contingency operation specified in clause (ii) is eligible for hospital care, medical services, and nursing home care under subsection (a)(2)(F) for any illness.

“(ii) A contingency operation specified in this clause is any of the following:

“(I) Operation Enduring Freedom.

“(II) Operation Freedom’s Sentinel.

“(III) Operation Iraqi Freedom.

“(IV) Operation New Dawn.

“(V) Operation Inherent Resolve.

“(VI) Resolute Support Mission.”; and

(B) in paragraph (2)(B)—

(i) by striking “or (F)” and inserting “(F), (G), (H), or (I)”; and

(ii) by striking “service or testing” and inserting “service, testing, or activity”.

(2) **PHASE IN.**—Such subsection is further amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(6)(A) The Secretary shall determine the dates in subparagraphs (G), (H), and (I) of paragraph (1) as follows:

“(i) October 1, 2024, with respect to a veteran described in such subparagraph (G) or (H) who

was discharged or released from the active military, naval, air, or space service during the period beginning on August 2, 1990, and ending on September 11, 2001.

“(ii) October 1, 2026, with respect to a veteran described in such subparagraph (G) or (H) who was discharged or released from the active military, naval, air, or space service during the period beginning on September 12, 2001, and ending on December 31, 2006.

“(iii) October 1, 2028, with respect to a veteran described in such subparagraph (G) or (H) who was discharged or released from the active military, naval, air, or space service during the period beginning on January 1, 2007, and ending on December 31, 2012.

“(iv) October 1, 2030, with respect to a veteran described in such subparagraph (G) or (H) who was discharged or released from the active military, naval, air, or space service during the period beginning on January 1, 2013, and ending on December 31, 2018.

“(v) October 1, 2032, with respect to a veteran described in such subparagraph (I).

“(B) The Secretary may modify a date specified in subparagraph (A) to an earlier date, as the Secretary determines appropriate based on the number of veterans receiving hospital care, medical services, and nursing home care under subparagraphs (G), (H), and (I) of paragraph (1) and the resources available to the Secretary. If the Secretary determines to so modify a date, the Secretary shall—

“(i) notify the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate of the proposed modification; and

“(ii) publish such modified date in the Federal Register.”.

(b) **OUTREACH PLANS.**—With respect to each of clauses (i) through (v) of section 1710(e)(6)(A) of title 38, United States Code (as added by subsection (a)(2)), not later than 180 days prior to the date specified in the clause (including a date modified pursuant to such section), the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate a plan to conduct outreach to the veterans referred to in the clause to notify such veterans of their eligibility for hospital care, medical services, or nursing home care under subparagraph (G), (H), or (I), of section 1710(e)(1) of such title, as the case may be.

**SEC. 104. ASSESSMENTS OF IMPLEMENTATION AND OPERATION.**

(a) **INITIAL RESOURCE ASSESSMENT AND REPORT.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall—

(1) complete an assessment to determine—

(A) the personnel and material resources necessary to implement section 103 (including the amendments made by such section); and

(B) the total number of covered veterans, as such term is defined in section 1119(c) of title 38, United States Code (as added by section 302), who receive hospital care or medical services furnished by the Secretary under chapter 17 of such title, disaggregated by priority group specified in section 1705(a) of such title; and

(2) submit to the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate a report containing the findings of the assessment completed under paragraph (1), including a specific determination as to whether the Department has the personnel and material resources necessary to implement section 103.

(b) **INFORMATION SYSTEMS.**—Not later than October 1, 2024, the Secretary shall establish information systems to assess the implementation of section 103, including the amendments made by such section, and use the results of assessments under such systems to inform the reports under subsection (c).

(c) **ANNUAL REPORTS.**—

(1) **REPORTS.**—Not later than October 1, 2025, and on an annual basis thereafter until October 1, 2033, the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of

Representatives and the Senate a report on the following:

(A) The effect of the implementation of, and the provision and management of care under, section 103, (including the amendments made by such section) on the demand by veterans described in subparagraphs (G), (H), and (I) of section 1710(e)(1) of title 38, United States Code (as added by such section 103) for health care services furnished by the Secretary.

(B) Any differing patterns of demand for health care services by such veterans, disaggregated by factors such as the relative distance of the veteran from medical facilities of the Department and whether the veteran had previously received hospital care or medical services furnished by the Secretary under chapter 17 of such title.

(C) The extent to which the Secretary has met such demand.

(D) Any changes, during the year covered by the report, in the delivery patterns of health care furnished by the Secretary under chapter 17 of such title, and the fiscal impact of such changes.

(2) **MATTERS.**—Each report under paragraph (1) shall include, with respect to the year covered by the report, detailed information on the following:

(A) The total number of veterans enrolled in the patient enrollment system who, during such year, received hospital care or medical services furnished by the Secretary under chapter 17 of title 38, United States Code.

(B) Of the veterans specified in subparagraph (A), the number of such veterans who, during the preceding three fiscal years, had not received such care or services.

(C) With respect to the veterans specified in subparagraph (B), the cost of providing health care to such veterans during the year covered by the report, shown in total and disaggregated by—

(i) the level of care; and

(ii) whether the care was provided through the Veterans Community Care Program.

(D) With respect to the number of veterans described in subparagraphs (G), (H), and (I) of section 1710(e)(1) of title 38, United States Code (as added by section 103), the following (shown in total and disaggregated by medical facility of the Department, as applicable):

(i) The number of such veterans who, during the year covered by the report, enrolled in the patient enrollment system.

(ii) The number of such veterans who applied for, but were denied, such enrollment.

(iii) The number of such veterans who were denied hospital care or a medical service furnished by the Secretary that was considered to be medically necessary but not of an emergency nature.

(E) The numbers and characteristics of, and the type and extent of health care furnished by the Secretary to, veterans enrolled in the patient enrollment system (shown in total and disaggregated by medical facility of the Department).

(F) The numbers and characteristics of, and the type and extent of health care furnished by the Secretary to, veterans not enrolled in the patient enrollment system (disaggregated by each class of eligibility for care under section 1710 of title 38, United States Code, and further shown as a total per class and disaggregated by medical facility of the Department).

(G) The specific fiscal impact (shown in total and disaggregated by geographic health care delivery areas) of changes in the delivery patterns of health care furnished by the Secretary under chapter 17 of such title as a result of the implementation of section 103 (including the amendments made by such section).

(d) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

(1) The term “patient enrollment system” means the patient enrollment system of the Department of Veterans Affairs established and operated under section 1705 of title 38, United States Code.

(2) The term “Veterans Community Care Program” means the program established under section 1703 of title 38, United States Code.

**Subtitle B—Certain Veterans of Combat Service**

**SEC. 111. EXPANSION OF PERIOD OF ELIGIBILITY FOR HEALTH CARE FOR CERTAIN VETERANS OF COMBAT SERVICE.**

(a) EXPANDED PERIOD.—Section 1710(e)(3) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A)—

(A) by striking “January 27, 2003” and inserting “September 11, 2001”; and

(B) by striking “five-year period” and inserting “10-year period”;

(2) by amending subparagraph (B) to read as follows:

“(B) With respect to a veteran described in paragraph (1)(D) who was discharged or released from the active military, naval, air, or space service after September 11, 2001, and before October 1, 2013, but did not enroll to receive such hospital care, medical services, or nursing home care under such paragraph pursuant to the subparagraph (A) before October 1, 2022, the one-year period beginning on October 1, 2022.”;

and

(3) by striking subparagraph (C).

(b) CLARIFICATION OF COVERAGE.—Section 1710(e)(1)(D) is amended by inserting after “Persian Gulf War” the following: “(including any veteran who, in connection with service during such period, received the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, Service Specific Expeditionary Medal, Combat Era Specific Expeditionary Medal, Campaign Specific Medal, or any other combat theater award established by a Federal statute or an Executive order)”.

(c) OUTREACH PLAN.—Not later than December 1, 2022, the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate a plan to conduct outreach to veterans described in subparagraph (B) of section 1710(e)(3) of title 38, United States Code, as amended by subsection (a)(2), to notify such veterans of their eligibility for hospital care, medical services, or nursing home care pursuant to such subparagraph.

(d) REPORT ON ENROLLMENTS.—Not later than January 30, 2024, the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate a report identifying, with respect to the one-year period beginning on October 1, 2022, the number of veterans described in section 1710(e)(3)(B) of title 38, United States Code, as amended by subsection (a)(2), who, during such period, enrolled in the patient enrollment system of the Department of Veterans Affairs established and operated under section 1705 of such title.

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section and the amendments made by this section shall take effect on October 1, 2022.

**TITLE II—TOXIC EXPOSURE PRESUMPTION PROCESS**

**SEC. 201. SHORT TITLE.**

This subtitle may be cited as the “Fairly Assessing Service-related Toxic Exposure Residuals Presumptions Act” or the “FASTER Presumptions Act”.

**SEC. 202. IMPROVEMENTS TO ABILITY OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO ESTABLISH PRESUMPTIONS OF SERVICE CONNECTION BASED ON TOXIC EXPOSURE.**

(a) ADVISORY COMMITTEES, PANELS, AND BOARDS.—Chapter 11 is amended by adding at the end the following new subchapter:

**“SUBCHAPTER VII—DETERMINATIONS RELATING TO PRESUMPTIONS OF SERVICE CONNECTION BASED ON TOXIC EXPOSURE**

**“§ 1711. Procedures to determine presumptions of service connection based on toxic exposure; definitions**

“(a) PROCEDURES.—The Secretary shall determine whether to establish, or to remove, pre-

sumptions of service connection based on toxic exposure pursuant to this subchapter, where- by—

“(1) the Formal Advisory Committee on Toxic Exposure under section 1172 of this title—

“(A) provides advice to the Secretary on toxic-exposed veterans and cases in which veterans who, during active military, naval, air, or space service, may have experienced a toxic exposure or their dependents may have experienced a toxic exposure while the veterans were serving in the active military, naval, air, or space service;

“(B) provides to the Secretary recommendations on corrections needed in the Individual Longitudinal Exposure Record, or successor system, to better reflect veterans and dependents described in subparagraph (A); and

“(C) provides to the Secretary recommendations regarding which cases of possible toxic exposure should be reviewed; and

“(2) the Secretary provides for formal evaluations of such recommendations under section 1173 of this title; and

“(3) the Secretary issues regulations under section 1174 of this title.

“(b) ILLNESS DEFINED.—In this subchapter, the term ‘illness’ includes a disease or other condition affecting the health of an individual.

**“§ 1172. Formal Advisory Committee on Toxic Exposure**

“(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—(1) There is in the Veterans Health Administration of the Department the Formal Advisory Committee on Toxic Exposure (in this section referred to as the ‘Committee’).

“(2)(A) The Committee shall be composed of nine members appointed as follows:

“(i) Five members shall be appointed by the Secretary.

“(ii) One member shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

“(iii) One member shall be appointed by the minority leader of the House of Representatives.

“(iv) One member shall be appointed by the majority leader of the Senate.

“(v) One member shall be appointed by the minority leader of the Senate.

“(B) The members appointed under subparagraph (A) shall meet the following criteria:

“(i) Not more than three members shall be appointed from among individuals who are officials or employees of the Veterans Benefits Administration or the Veterans Health Administration.

“(ii) At least one member shall be appointed from among individuals who are officials or employees of other departments or agencies of the Federal Government, including the Department of Defense and the Agency of Toxic Substances and Disease Registry of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

“(iii) At least two members shall represent an organization recognized by the Secretary for the representation of veterans under section 5902 of this title.

“(iv) At least one member shall be appointed from among individuals in the private sector, State or local government, or academia, who are experts in toxicology and epidemiology.

“(3) The Secretary shall determine the pay and allowances of the members of the Committee, including with respect to any additional pay and allowances for members who are officials or employees of the Federal Government.

“(4)(A) Except as provided by subparagraph (B), each member of the Committee shall be appointed for a two-year term, and may serve not more than three successive terms.

“(B) With respect to the five members who are initially appointed by the Secretary under subparagraph (A)(i), the Secretary shall determine the length of the term of each such member in a manner that ensures the expiration of the terms on a staggered basis.”.

“(5) A vacancy in the Committee shall be filled in the manner in which the original appointment was made.

“(b) CONSULTATION.—The Secretary may consult with, and seek the advice of, the Committee with respect to cases in which veterans who, during active military, naval, air, or space service, are suspected of having experienced a toxic exposure or dependents of veterans who may have experienced a toxic exposure during such service.

“(c) ASSESSMENTS.—(1) The Committee shall assess cases of the toxic exposure of veterans and their dependents that occurred during active military, naval, air, or space service, including by conducting ongoing surveillance and reviewing such exposure described in scientific literature, media reports, information from veterans, and information from Congress.

“(2) The assessments under paragraph (1) shall cover suspected and known toxic exposures occurring during active military, naval, air, or space service, including by identifying and evaluating new and emerging toxic exposures that are not recognized under existing presumptions of service connection.

“(3) The Committee may conduct an assessment under paragraph (1) in response to comments by a person described in subsection (e)(2), by a majority vote of the members of the Committee.

“(4) The Committee shall on a periodic basis assess the Individual Longitudinal Exposure Record, or successor system, to ensure the accuracy of data collected.

“(d) RESEARCH RECOMMENDATIONS.—(1) Following an assessment of a case of the toxic exposure of veterans or their dependents that occurred during active military, naval, air, or space service under subsection (c), the Committee may develop a recommendation for formal evaluation under section 1173 of this title to conduct a review of the health effects related to the case of exposure if the Committee determines that the research may change the current understanding of the relationship between an exposure to an environmental hazard and adverse health outcomes in humans.

“(2) Upon receipt of evidence suggesting that previous findings regarding the periods and locations of exposure covered by an existing presumption of service connection are no longer supported, the Committee may nominate such evidence for formal evaluation under section 1173 of this title to modify the periods and locations.

“(e) INPUT.—(1) Not less than quarterly, the Committee shall provide an opportunity for persons described in paragraph (2) to present written or oral comments to the Committee.

“(2) The persons described in this paragraph are persons who may be affected by the actions of the Committee, including—

“(A) veterans, the families of veterans, veterans service organizations and representatives, researchers, and other members of the general public; and

“(B) departments and agencies of the Federal Government.

“(f) REPORTS BY THE COMMITTEE.—Not less frequently than once each year, the Committee shall submit to the Secretary and the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the House of Representatives, and make publicly available, a report on—

“(1) recommendations for research under subsection (d), if any; and

“(2) recommendations for such legislative or administrative action as the Committee considers necessary for the Committee to be more effective in carrying out the requirements of this section.

“(g) RESPONSES BY SECRETARY.—In response to each report submitted under subsection (f), the Secretary shall submit to the Secretary and the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the House of Representatives, and make publicly available, a report on—

“(1) the findings and opinions of the Secretary with respect to the report most recently submitted under subsection (f); and

“(2) whether the Secretary will conduct research recommended under subsection (f) included in the report, and if not, an explanation of why, including citations and sources.

“(h) NONAPPLICATION OF SUNSET REQUIREMENTS.—Section 14 of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply to the Committee.

**“§ 1173. Formal evaluation of recommendations**

“(a) FORMAL EVALUATION.—The Secretary shall establish a process to conduct a formal evaluation with respect to each recommendation made by the Formal Advisory Committee on Toxic Exposure under section 1172 of this title—

“(1) to conduct research regarding the health effects related to a case of toxic exposure; or

“(2) to evaluate evidence regarding the periods and locations of exposure covered by an existing presumption of service connection.

“(b) EVIDENCE, DATA, AND FACTORS.—The Secretary shall ensure that each formal evaluation under paragraph (1) covers the following:

“(1) Scientific evidence, based on the review of available scientific literature, including human, toxicological, animal, and methodological studies, and other factors.

“(2) Claims data, based on the review of claim rate, grant rate, and service connection prevalence, and other factors.

“(3) Other factors the Secretary determines appropriate, such as—

“(A) the level of disability and mortality caused by the health effects related to the case of toxic exposure being evaluated;

“(B) the level of assistance required to remain in the community because of such health effects;

“(C) the quantity and quality of the information available and reviewed;

“(D) the feasibility of and period for generating relevant information and evidence;

“(E) whether such health effects are combat- or deployment-related; and

“(F) the ubiquity or rarity of the health effects.

“(c) CONDUCT OF EVALUATIONS.—(1) The Secretary shall ensure that each formal evaluation under subsection (a)—

“(A) reviews scientific evidence in a manner that—

“(i) conforms to principles of scientific and data integrity;

“(ii) is free from suppression or distortion of scientific or technological findings, data, information, conclusions, or technical results; and

“(B)(i) evaluates the likelihood that a positive association exists between an illness and a toxic exposure while serving in the active military, naval, air, or space service; and

“(ii) assesses the toxic exposures and illnesses and determines whether the evidence supports a finding of a positive association between the toxic exposure and the illness.

“(2) In carrying out paragraph (1)(B)(ii), a formal evaluation under subsection (a) shall include reviewing all relevant data to determine the strength of evidence for a positive association based on the following four categories:

“(A) The ‘sufficient’ category, where the evidence is sufficient to conclude that a positive association exists.

“(B) The ‘equipoise and above’ category, where the evidence is sufficient to conclude that a positive association is at least as likely as not, but not sufficient to conclude that a positive association exists.

“(C) The ‘below equipoise’ category, where the evidence is not sufficient to conclude that a positive association is at least as likely as not, or is not sufficient to make a scientifically informed judgment.

“(D) The ‘against’ category, where the evidence suggests the lack of a positive association.

“(d) RECOMMENDATION FOR RULEMAKING.—Not later than 120 days after the date on which a formal evaluation is commenced, the element of the Department that conducts the evaluation

shall submit to the Secretary a recommendation with respect to establishing a presumption of service connection for the toxic exposure and illness, or modifying an existing presumption of service connection, covered by the evaluation.

**“§ 1174. Regulations regarding presumptions of service connection based on toxic exposure**

“(a) ACTION UPON RECOMMENDATION.—Not later than 160 days after the date on which the Secretary receives a recommendation to establish or modify a presumption of service connection under section 1173 of this title—

“(1) if the Secretary determines that the presumption, or modification, is warranted, the Secretary shall commence issuing regulations in accordance with the provisions of subchapter II of chapter 5 of title 5 (commonly referred to as the Administrative Procedures Act) setting forth the presumption or commence revising regulations to carry out such modification; or

“(2) if the Secretary determines that the presumption, or modification, is not warranted, the Secretary shall publish in the Federal Register a notice of the determination, including the reasons supporting the determination.

“(b) REMOVAL OF PRESUMPTION.—(1) The Secretary may issue regulations to remove an illness from a presumption of service connection previously established pursuant to a regulation issued under subsection (a).

“(2) Whenever an illness is removed from regulations pursuant to paragraph (1), or the periods and locations of exposure covered by a presumption of service connection are modified under subsection (a)—

“(A) a veteran who was awarded compensation for such illness on the basis of the presumption provided under such regulations before the effective date of the removal or modification shall continue to be entitled to receive compensation on that basis; and

“(B) a survivor of a veteran who was awarded dependency and indemnity compensation for the death of a veteran resulting from such illness on the basis of such presumption shall continue to be entitled to receive dependency and indemnity compensation on such basis.

**“§ 1175. Authority to modify process; congressional oversight**

“(a) AUTHORITY.—(1) The Secretary may modify the process under which the Secretary conducts formal evaluations under section 1173 of this title and issues regulations under section 1174 if—

“(A) such evaluations cover the evidence, data, and factors required by subsection (b) of such section 1173; and

“(B) a period of 180 days has elapsed following the date on which the Secretary submits the notice under paragraph (2) regarding the modification.

“(2) If the Secretary proposes to modify the process under which the Secretary conducts formal evaluations under section 1173 of this title or issues regulations under section 1174, the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate a notice of the proposed modifications containing the following:

“(A) A description of the proposed modifications.

“(B) A description of any exceptions to the requirements of such sections that are proposed because of limited available scientific evidence, and a description of how such evaluations will be conducted.

“(b) REPORTS AND BRIEFINGS.—(1)(A) Not later than two years after the date of the enactment of the Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act of 2021, the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate a report on the implementation of, and recommendations for, this subchapter.

“(B) The Secretary shall develop the report under subparagraph (A) in consultation with

organizations recognized by the Secretary for the representation of veterans under section 5902 of this title and any other entity the Secretary determines appropriate.

“(2) On a quarterly basis during the two-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of the Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act of 2021, the Secretary shall provide to the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate a briefing on the implementation of this subchapter.

“(c) INDEPENDENT REVIEW.—The Secretary shall seek to enter into an agreement with a nongovernmental entity or a federally funded research and development center to conduct a review of the implementation of this subchapter. Not later than 540 days after the date of the enactment of the Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act of 2021, the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate a report containing such review.”

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Chapter 11 is amended—

(1) in section 1116—

(A) by striking subsections (b), (c), (d), and (e);

(B) by inserting after subsection (a) the following new subsection (b):

“(b) The Secretary shall ensure that any determination made on or after the date of the enactment of the Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act of 2021 regarding a presumption of service connection based on exposure to an herbicide agent under this section is made pursuant to subchapter VII of this chapter, including with respect to assessing reports received by the Secretary from the National Academy of Sciences under section 3 of the Agent Orange Act of 1991 (Public Law 102-4).”; and

(C) by redesignating subsection (f) as subsection (c);

(2) in section 1116(b)(2)(A), by inserting “pursuant to subchapter VII of this chapter,” before “the Secretary determines”; and

(3) in section 1118—

(A) by striking subsections (b) through (e); and

(B) by inserting after subsection (a) the following new subsection (b):

“(b) The Secretary shall ensure that any determination made on or after the date of the enactment of the Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act of 2021 regarding a presumption of service connection based on a toxic exposure under this section is made pursuant to subchapter VII of this chapter.”

(c) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in section 1172(a)(2)(A) of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), shall be construed so as to require the advice and consent of the Senate in the appointment of members of the Formal Advisory Committee on Toxic Exposure.

**SEC. 203. REEVALUATION OF CLAIMS FOR COMPENSATION INVOLVING PRESUMPTIONS OF SERVICE CONNECTION.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter VI of chapter 11 is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

**“§ 1167. Reevaluation of compensation determinations pursuant to changes in presumptions of service connection**

“(a) REEVALUATION.—Whenever a law, including through a regulation or Federal court decision, establishes or modifies a presumption of service connection, the Secretary shall—

“(1) identify all claims for compensation under this chapter that—

“(A) were submitted to the Secretary;

“(B) were evaluated and denied by the Secretary before the date on which such provision of law went into effect; and

“(C) might have been evaluated differently had the establishment or modification been applicable to the claim;

“(2) allow for the reevaluation of such claims at the election of the veteran; and

“(3) notwithstanding section 5110 of this title, with respect to claims approved pursuant to such reevaluation, provide compensation under this chapter effective as if the establishment or modification of the presumption of service connection had been in effect on the date of the submission of the original claim described in paragraph (1).

“(b) **OUTREACH.**—The Secretary shall conduct outreach to inform relevant veterans that they may elect to have a claim be reevaluated in light of the establishment or modification of a presumption of service connection described in subsection (a). Such outreach shall include the following:

“(1) The Secretary shall publish on the internet website of the Department a notice that such veterans may elect to have a claim so reevaluated.

“(2) The Secretary shall notify, in writing or by electronic means, veterans service organizations of the ability of such veterans to elect to have a claim so reevaluated.”

(b) **APPLICATION.**—Section 1167 of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), shall apply with respect to presumptions of service connection established or modified on or after the date of the enactment of this Act, including pursuant to amendments made by this Act.

### **TITLE III—IMPROVING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SERVICE CONNECTION PROCESSES FOR TOXIC-EXPOSED VETERANS**

#### **SEC. 301. SHORT TITLE.**

This title may be cited as the “Veterans Burn Pits Exposure Recognition Act”.

#### **SEC. 302. PRESUMPTIONS OF TOXIC EXPOSURE.**

Subchapter II of chapter 11 is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

##### **“§ 1119. Presumptions of toxic exposure**

“(a) **CONSIDERATION OF RECORDS.**—If a veteran submits to the Secretary a claim for compensation for a service-connected disability under section 1110 of this title with evidence of a disability and a toxic exposure that occurred during active military, naval, air, or space service, the Secretary may, in adjudicating such claim, consider—

“(1) any record of the veteran in an exposure tracking record system; and

“(2) if no record of the veteran in an exposure tracking record system indicates that the veteran was subject to a toxic exposure during active military, naval, air, or space service, the totality of the circumstances of the service of the veteran.

“(b) **PRESUMPTION OF SPECIFIC TOXIC EXPOSURE FOR MEMBERS WHO SERVED IN CERTAIN LOCATIONS.**—(1) The Secretary shall, for purposes of section 1110 and chapter 17 of this title, presume that any covered veteran was exposed to the substances, chemicals, and airborne hazards identified in the list under paragraph (2) during the service of the covered veteran specified in subsection (c)(1), unless there is affirmative evidence to establish that the covered veteran was not exposed to any such substances, chemicals, or hazards in connection with such service.

“(2) The Secretary shall establish and maintain a list that contains an identification of one or more such substances, chemicals, and airborne hazards as the Secretary, in collaboration with the Secretary of Defense, may determine appropriate for purposes of this section.

“(3) Beginning not later than two years after the date of the enactment of the Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act of 2021, and not less frequently than once every two years thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate a report identifying any additions or removals to the list under paragraph (2) during the period covered by the report.

“(c) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

“(1) The term ‘covered veteran’ means any veteran who—

“(A) on or after August 2, 1990, performed active military, naval, air, or space service while assigned to a duty station in—

“(i) Bahrain;

“(ii) Iraq;

“(iii) Kuwait;

“(iv) Oman;

“(v) Qatar;

“(vi) Saudi Arabia;

“(vii) Somalia; or

“(viii) United Arab Emirates; or

“(B) on or after September 11, 2001, performed active military, naval, air, or space service while assigned to a duty station in—

“(i) Afghanistan;

“(ii) Djibouti;

“(iii) Egypt;

“(iv) Jordan;

“(v) Lebanon;

“(vi) Syria;

“(vii) Yemen;

“(viii) Uzbekistan;

“(ix) the Philippines; or

“(x) any other country determined relevant by the Secretary.

“(2) The term ‘exposure tracking record system’—

“(A) means any system, program, or pilot program used by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs or the Secretary of Defense to track how veterans or members of the Armed Forces have been exposed to various occupational or environmental hazards; and

“(B) includes the Individual Longitudinal Exposure Record, or successor system.

“(3) The term ‘toxic exposure risk activity’ has the meaning given such term in section 1710(e)(4) of this title.”

#### **SEC. 303. MEDICAL NEXUS EXAMINATIONS FOR TOXIC EXPOSURE RISK ACTIVITIES.**

Subchapter VI of chapter 11, as amended by section 203, is further amended by adding at the end the following new section:

##### **“§ 1168. Medical nexus examinations for toxic exposure risk activities**

“(a) **MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS AND MEDICAL OPINIONS.**—(1) Except as provided in subsection (b), if a veteran submits to the Secretary a claim for compensation for a service-connected disability under section 1110 of this title with evidence of a disability and evidence of participation in a toxic exposure risk activity during active military, naval, air, or space service, and such evidence is not sufficient to establish a service connection for the disability, the Secretary shall—

“(A) provide the veteran with a medical examination under section 5103A(d) of this title; and

“(B) obtain a medical opinion (to be requested by the Secretary in connection with the medical examination under subparagraph (A)) as to whether it is at least as likely as not that there is a nexus between the disability and the toxic exposure risk activity.

“(2) When providing the Secretary with a medical opinion under paragraph (1)(B) for a veteran, the health care provider shall consider—

“(A) the total potential exposure through all applicable military deployments of the veteran; and

“(B) the synergistic, combined effect of all toxic exposure risk activities of the veteran.

“(3) The requirement under paragraph (2)(B) shall not be construed as requiring a health care provider to consider the synergistic, combined effect of each of the substances, chemicals, and airborne hazards identified in the list under section 1119(b)(2) of this title.

“(b) **EXCEPTION.**—Subsection (a) shall not apply if the Secretary determines there is no indication of an association between the disability claimed by the veteran and the toxic exposure risk activity for which the veteran submitted evidence.

“(c) **TOXIC EXPOSURE RISK ACTIVITY DEFINED.**—In this section, the term ‘toxic exposure risk activity’ has the meaning given that term in section 1710(e)(4) of this title.”

### **TITLE IV—PRESUMPTIONS OF SERVICE CONNECTION**

#### **SEC. 401. TREATMENT OF VETERANS WHO PARTICIPATED IN CLEANUP OF ENEWETAK ATOLL AS RADIATION-EXPOSED VETERANS FOR PURPOSES OF PRESUMPTION OF SERVICE CONNECTION OF CERTAIN DISABILITIES BY DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

(a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This section may be cited as the “Mark Takai Atomic Veterans Healthcare Parity Act”.

(b) **ENEWETAK ATOLL.**—Section 1112(c)(3)(B) is amended by adding at the end the following new clause:

“(v) Cleanup of Enewetak Atoll during the period beginning on January 1, 1977, and ending on December 31, 1980.”

#### **SEC. 402. TREATMENT OF VETERANS WHO PARTICIPATED IN NUCLEAR RESPONSE NEAR PALOMARES, SPAIN, OR THULE, GREENLAND, AS RADIATION-EXPOSED VETERANS FOR PURPOSES OF PRESUMPTION OF SERVICE CONNECTION OF CERTAIN DISABILITIES BY DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

(a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This section may be cited as the “Palomares or Thule Veterans Act”.

(b) **PALOMARES OR THULE.**—Section 1112(c)(3)(B), as amended by section 401, is further amended by adding at the end the following new clauses:

“(vi) Onsite participation in the response effort following the collision of a United States Air Force B-52 bomber and refueling plane that caused the release of four thermonuclear weapons in the vicinity of Palomares, Spain, during the period beginning January 17, 1966, and ending March 31, 1967.”

“(vii) Onsite participation in the response effort following the on-board fire and crash of a United States Air Force B-52 bomber that caused the release of four thermonuclear weapons in the vicinity of Thule Air Force Base, Greenland, during the period beginning January 21, 1968, and ending September 25, 1968.”

#### **SEC. 403. PRESUMPTIONS OF SERVICE CONNECTION FOR DISEASES ASSOCIATED WITH EXPOSURES TO CERTAIN HERBICIDE AGENTS FOR VETERANS WHO SERVED IN CERTAIN LOCATIONS.**

(a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This section may be cited as the “Veterans Agent Orange Exposure Equity Act”.

(b) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 1116, as amended by section 202, is further amended—

(1) by striking “, during active military, naval, air, or space service, served in the Republic of Vietnam during the period beginning on January 9, 1962, and ending on May 7, 1975” each place it appears and inserting “performed covered service”; and

(2) by striking “performed active military, naval, air, or space service in the Republic of Vietnam during the period beginning on January 9, 1962, and ending on May 7, 1975” each place it appears and inserting “performed covered service”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(d) In this section, the term ‘covered service’ means active military, naval, air, or space service—

“(1) performed in the Republic of Vietnam during the period beginning on January 9, 1962, and ending on May 7, 1975;

“(2) performed in Thailand at any United States or Royal Thai base during the period beginning on January 9, 1962, and ending on June 30, 1976, without regard to where on the base the veteran was located or what military job specialty the veteran performed;

“(3) performed in Laos during the period beginning on December 1, 1965, and ending on September 30, 1969;

“(4) performed in Cambodia at Mimot or Krek, Kampong Cham Province during the period beginning on April 16, 1969, and ending on April 30, 1969; or

“(5) performed on Guam or American Samoa, or in the territorial waters thereof, during the period beginning on January 9, 1962, and ending on July 31, 1980, or served on Johnston Atoll or on a ship that called at Johnston Atoll during the period beginning on January 1, 1972, and ending on September 30, 1977.”.

(c) **ELIGIBILITY FOR HOSPITAL CARE AND MEDICAL SERVICES.**—Section 1710(e)(4), as amended by section 102(c), is further amended by striking subparagraph (A) and inserting the following new subparagraph:

“(A) The term ‘Vietnam-era herbicide-exposed veteran’ means a veteran who—

“(i) performed covered service, as defined in section 1116(d) of this title; or

“(ii) the Secretary finds may have been exposed during such service to dioxin or was exposed during such service to a toxic substance found in a herbicide or defoliant used for military purposes during such period.”.

(d) **CONFORMING AMENDMENT.**—The heading for section 1116 is amended by striking “**the Republic of Vietnam**” and inserting “**certain locations**”.

**SEC. 404. ADDITION OF ADDITIONAL DISEASES ASSOCIATED WITH EXPOSURE TO CERTAIN HERBICIDE AGENTS FOR WHICH THERE IS A PRESUMPTION OF SERVICE CONNECTION FOR VETERANS WHO SERVED IN CERTAIN LOCATIONS.**

(a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This section may be cited as the “Fair Care for Vietnam Veterans Act”.

(b) **ADDITIONAL DISEASES.**—Section 1116(a)(2), as amended by section 9109 of the William M. (Mac) Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021 (Public Law 116–283), is further amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraphs:

“(L) Hypertension.

“(M) Monoclonal gammopathy of undetermined significance.”.

**SEC. 405. IMPROVING COMPENSATION FOR DISABILITIES OCCURRING IN PERSIAN GULF WAR VETERANS.**

(a) **REDUCTION IN THRESHOLD OF ELIGIBILITY.**—Subsection (a)(1) of section 1117 is amended by striking “became manifest—” and all that follows through the period at the end and inserting “became manifest to any degree at any time.”.

(b) **PERMANENT EXTENSION OF PERIOD OF ELIGIBILITY.**—Such section is further amended—

(1) by striking subsection (b);

(2) by redesignating subsections (c) and (d) as subsections (b) and (c), respectively; and

(3) in subsection (a)(2)(C), by striking “under subsection (d)” and inserting “under subsection (c)”.

(c) **ESTABLISHING SINGULAR DISABILITY-BASED QUESTIONNAIRE.**—Such section is further amended by inserting after subsection (c) (as redesignated by subsection (b)) the following new subsection (d):

“(d) If a Persian Gulf veteran at a medical facility of the Department presents with any one symptom associated with Gulf War Illness, the Secretary shall ensure that health care personnel of the Department use a disability benefits questionnaire, or successor questionnaire, designed to identify Gulf War Illness, in addition to any other diagnostic actions the personnel determine appropriate.”.

(d) **EXPANSION OF DEFINITION OF PERSIAN GULF VETERAN.**—Subsection (f) of such section is amended by inserting “, Afghanistan, Israel, Egypt, Turkey, Syria, or Jordan,” after “operations”.

(e) **TRAINING.**—Such section is further amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(i)(1) The Secretary shall take such actions as may be necessary to ensure that health care

personnel of the Department are appropriately trained to effectively carry out this section.

“(2) Not less frequently than once each year, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the actions taken by the Secretary to carry out paragraph (1).”.

**SEC. 406. PRESUMPTION OF SERVICE CONNECTION FOR CERTAIN DISEASES ASSOCIATED WITH EXPOSURE TO BURN PITS AND OTHER TOXINS.**

(a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This section may be cited as the “Presumptive Benefits for War Fighters Exposed to Burn Pits and Other Toxins Act”.

(b) **IN GENERAL.**—Subchapter II of chapter 11, as amended by section 302, is further amended by inserting after section 1119 the following new section:

**“§ 1120. Presumption of service connection for certain diseases associated with exposure to burn pits and other toxins**

“(a) **PRESUMPTION OF SERVICE CONNECTION.**—For the purposes of section 1110 of this title, and subject to section 1113 of this title, a disease specified in subsection (b) becoming manifest in a covered veteran shall be considered to have been incurred in or aggravated during active military, naval, air, or space service, notwithstanding that there is no record of evidence of such disease during the period of such service.

“(b) **DISEASES SPECIFIED.**—The diseases specified in this subsection are the following:

“(1) Asthma that was diagnosed after service of the covered veteran as specified in subsection (c).

“(2) The following types of cancer:

“(A) Head cancer of any type.

“(B) Neck cancer of any type.

“(C) Respiratory cancer of any type.

“(D) Gastrointestinal cancer of any type.

“(E) Reproductive cancer of any type.

“(F) Lymphoma cancer of any type.

“(G) Lymphomatic cancer of any type.

“(H) Kidney cancer.

“(I) Brain cancer.

“(J) Melanoma.

“(K) Pancreatic cancer.

“(3) Chronic bronchitis.

“(4) Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

“(5) Constrictive bronchiolitis or obliterative bronchiolitis.

“(6) Emphysema.

“(7) Granulomatous disease.

“(8) Interstitial lung disease.

“(9) Pleuritis.

“(10) Pulmonary fibrosis.

“(11) Sarcoidosis.

“(12) Chronic sinusitis.

“(13) Chronic rhinitis.

“(14) Glioblastoma.

“(15) Any other disease for which the Secretary determines, pursuant to regulations prescribed under subchapter VII that a presumption of service connection is warranted based on a positive association with a substance, chemical, or airborne hazard identified in the list under section 1119(b)(2) of this title.

“(c) **COVERED VETERAN DEFINED.**—In this section, the term ‘covered veteran’ has the meaning given that term in section 1119(c) of this title.”.

(c) **CONFORMING AMENDMENT.**—Section 1113 is amended by striking “or 1118” each place it appears and inserting “1118, or 1120”.

## TITLE V—RESEARCH MATTERS

**SEC. 501. COORDINATION BY DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS OF TOXIC EXPOSURE RESEARCH.**

Subchapter II of chapter 73 is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

**“§ 7330D. Coordination of toxic exposure research**

“(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall coordinate all research activities carried out or funded by the executive branch of the Federal Government on the health consequences of toxic exposures experienced during service in the Armed Forces.

“(b) **STRATEGIC PLAN.**—In carrying out subsection (a), the Secretary shall establish a strategic plan, to be known as the Toxic Exposure Research Strategic Plan, to ensure that the research activities specified in such subsection are collaborative, transparent, and highly coordinated.

“(c) **REPORT.**—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of the Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act of 2021, and annually thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate a report on any research activities specified in subsection (a) carried out during the year covered by the report.”.

**SEC. 502. DATA COLLECTION, ANALYSIS, AND REPORT ON TREATMENT OF VETERANS FOR ILLNESSES RELATED TO TOXIC EXPOSURE.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall compile and analyze, on a continuous basis, all clinical data that—

(1) is obtained by the Secretary in connection with hospital care, medical services, or nursing home care furnished to a veteran for an illness under section 1710(a)(2)(F) of title 38, United States Code, as amended by section 102; and

(2) is likely to be scientifically useful, as determined by the Secretary, in determining whether a positive association exists between the illness of the veteran and a toxic exposure.

(b) **CONSENT OF PATIENTS.**—The Secretary shall ensure that the compilation and analysis of the clinical data of a veteran under subsection (a) shall be conducted, and such data shall be used, in a manner that is consistent with the informed consent of the veteran and in compliance with all applicable Federal law.

(c) **ANNUAL REPORT.**—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate a report containing—

(1) any data compiled under subsection (a);

(2) an analysis of any such data;

(3) a description of the types and incidences of illnesses identified by the Secretary pursuant to such subsection;

(4) an explanation by the Secretary for the incidence of such illnesses and such alternate explanations for the incidence of such illnesses as the Secretary may consider reasonable; and

(5) a description of the views of the Secretary regarding the scientific validity of drawing conclusions from the incidence of such illnesses, as evidenced by the data compiled under subsection (a), regarding the existence of a positive association between such illness and a toxic exposure.

(d) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

(1) The term “toxic exposure” has the meaning given that term in section 101 of title 38, United States Code.

(2) The term “illness” has the meaning given that term in section 1171 of such title, as added by section 202.

**SEC. 503. STUDIES RELATED TO VETERANS WHO SERVED IN SOUTHWEST ASIA AND CERTAIN OTHER LOCATIONS.**

(a) **ANALYSIS ON MORTALITY IN COVERED VETERANS.**—

(1) **ANALYSIS.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall conduct an updated analysis of total and respiratory disease mortality in covered veterans.

(2) **ELEMENTS.**—The analysis under paragraph (1) shall include, to the extent practicable, the following:

(A) Metrics of airborne exposures.

(B) The location and timing of any deployments of the veteran.

(C) The military occupational specialty of the veteran.

(D) The Armed Force in which the veteran served.



(E) The preexisting health status of the veteran, including with respect to asthma.

(F) Such personal information of the veteran as the Secretary may consider relevant, including cigarette and e-cigarette smoking history, diet, sex, gender, age, race, and ethnicity.

(b) **EPIDEMIOLOGICAL STUDY.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall conduct an epidemiological study of covered veterans that involves—

(1) the use of improved spatio-temporal estimates of ambient air pollution exposures that leverage advances in retrospective exposure assessment; and

(2) the collection of detailed information on the covered veterans studied through medical records, administrative data, and other existing sources, including, with respect to the covered veterans—

(A) personal information, including cigarette and e-cigarette smoking history, diet, sex, gender, age, race, and ethnicity;

(B) deployment history, including locations, periods, and number of deployments;

(C) biospecimen data; and

(D) supplementary health status and outcomes data, including imaging and physiological parameters.

(c) **TOXICOLOGY STUDY.**—

(1) **STUDY.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall conduct a toxicology study, to include variability, to replicate toxic exposures of healthy, young members of the Armed Forces, as well as potentially susceptible members, with preexisting health conditions.

(2) **ELEMENTS.**—The study under paragraph (1) shall include—

(A) an analysis of results for mechanistic markers and clinically relevant outcomes; and

(B) a validation of any serum, tissue, or other biomarkers of toxic exposure, susceptibility, or effect with respect to the subjects of the study.

(d) **COVERED VETERAN DEFINED.**—In this section, the term “covered veteran” has the meaning given that term in section 1119(c) of title 38, United States Code, as added by section 302.

#### **SEC. 504. STUDY ON HEALTH TRENDS OF POST 9/11 VETERANS.**

(a) **STUDY.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall conduct an epidemiological study on the health trends of veterans who served in the Armed Forces after September 11, 2001.

(b) **REPORT.**—Not later than two years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate a report on the study under subsection (a).

#### **SEC. 505. STUDY ON CANCER RATES AMONG VETERANS.**

(a) **STUDY.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall conduct a study on the incidence of cancer in veterans to determine trends in the rates of the incidence of cancer in veterans.

(b) **ELEMENTS.**—The study under subsection (a) shall assess, with respect to each veteran included in the study, the following:

(1) The age of the veteran.

(2) The period of service and length of service of the veteran in the Armed Forces.

(3) Any military occupational speciality of the veteran.

(4) The gender of the veteran.

(5) Any type of cancer that the veteran has.

(c) **REPORT.**—Not later than two years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate a report on the study under subsection (a).

#### **SEC. 506. STUDY ON FEASIBILITY AND AVAILABILITY OF FURNISHING HOSPITAL CARE AND MEDICAL SERVICES TO DEPENDENTS OF VETERANS WHO PARTICIPATED IN TOXIC EXPOSURE RISK ACTIVITIES.**

(a) **STUDY.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall conduct a study on the feasibility and ad-

visability of furnishing hospital care and medical services to qualifying dependents of veterans described in section 1710(e)(1)(G) of title 38, United States Code, as added by section 103(a)(1), for any illness determined by the Secretary to be connected to a toxic exposure risk activity carried out by the veteran, as determined by the Secretary, notwithstanding that there is insufficient medical evidence to conclude that such illness is attributable to such activity.

(b) **ELEMENTS.**—The study under subsection (a) shall include—

(1) an assessment of the impact of furnishing hospital care and medical services to qualifying dependents as described in such subsection on the ability of the Department of Veterans Affairs to furnish hospital care and medical services to veterans;

(2) an assessment of the potential cost of furnishing hospital care and medical services to qualifying dependents as described in such subsection;

(3) an estimate of the resources required to furnish such care and services;

(4) an assessment of any stress or other effect furnishing such care and services would have on the claims and appeals system of the Department;

(5) an estimate of the number of qualifying dependents who would be eligible for such care and services; and

(6) an assessment of the feasibility of adjudicating claims for such care and services.

(c) **PHASED-IN APPLICATION.**—In conducting the study under subsection (a), the Secretary shall assess the feasibility and advisability of phasing in the furnishing of hospital care and medical services to qualifying dependents described in such subsection by the decade in which such toxic exposure risk activity occurred, starting with the most recent decade.

(d) **REVIEW OF TOXIC EXPOSURE CASES REGARDING LIABILITY OF DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.**—In conducting the study under subsection (a), the Secretary shall—

(1) review known cases of toxic exposure on military installations of the Department of Defense located in the United States;

(2) analyze the liability of the Department of Defense in each such case; and

(3) assess whether the Secretary of Defense should provide care and services relating to such toxic exposures under the TRICARE program.

(e) **REPORT.**—Not later than two years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the study conducted under subsection (a).

(f) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

(1) The terms “hospital care” and “medical services” have the meanings given those terms in section 1701 of title 38, United States Code.

(2) The term “illness” has the meaning given that term in section 1171 of such title, as added by section 202.

(3) The term “qualifying dependent” means—  
(A) a dependent of a veteran described in section 1710(e)(1)(G) of title 38, United States Code, as added by section 104(a)(1), who resided with the veteran during the period in which, and on the installation at which, the veteran participated in a toxic exposure risk activity;

(B) an individual who was in utero of such a veteran or other qualifying dependent when the veteran participated in a toxic exposure risk activity; or

(C) a dependent of such a veteran who is not described in subparagraph (A) or (B) but who may have an illness that is connected to the toxic exposure risk activity of the veteran, as determined by the Secretary.

(4) The term “toxic exposure” has the meaning given that term in section 101 of such title, as added by section 102(b).

(5) The term “toxic exposure risk activity” has the meaning given that term in section 1710(e)(4) of such title, as added by section 102(c).

(6) The term “TRICARE program” has the meaning given that term in section 1072 of such title.

### **TITLE VI—IMPROVEMENT OF RESOURCES AND TRAINING REGARDING TOXIC-EXPOSED VETERANS**

#### **SEC. 601. SHORT TITLE; DEFINITIONS.**

(a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This title may be cited as the “Toxic Exposure in the American Military Act” or the “TEAM Act”.

(b) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this title, the terms “active military, naval, air, or space service”, “toxic exposure”, and “toxic-exposed veteran” have the meanings given those terms in section 101 of title 38, United States Code.

#### **SEC. 602. PUBLICATION OF LIST OF RESOURCES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FOR TOXIC-EXPOSED VETERANS AND OUTREACH PROGRAM FOR SUCH VETERANS AND CAREGIVERS AND SURVIVORS OF SUCH VETERANS.**

(a) **PUBLICATION OF LIST OF RESOURCES.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall publish a list of resources of the Department of Veterans Affairs for—

(A) toxic-exposed veterans, including with respect to—

(i) disability compensation under chapter 11 of title 38, United States Code; and

(ii) hospital care, medical services, and nursing home care under section 1710(a)(2)(F) of such title;

(B) caregivers of toxic-exposed veterans who are participating in the program of comprehensive assistance for family caregivers under section 1720G(a) of such title; and

(C) survivors of toxic-exposed veterans who are receiving death benefits under the laws administered by the Secretary.

(2) **UPDATE.**—The Secretary shall periodically update the list published under paragraph (1).

(b) **OUTREACH.**—The Secretary shall develop, with input from the community, an informative outreach program for veterans on illnesses that may be related to toxic exposure, including outreach with respect to benefits and support programs.

#### **SEC. 603. INCORPORATION OF TOXIC EXPOSURE QUESTIONNAIRE DURING PRIMARY CARE APPOINTMENTS.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall incorporate a clinical questionnaire to help determine potential toxic exposures during active military, naval, air, or space service as part of the initial screening conducted for an appointment of a veteran with a primary care provider of the Department of Veterans Affairs to improve understanding by the Department of toxic exposures of veterans while serving in the Armed Forces.

(b) **DETERMINATION OF QUESTIONS.**—The questions included in the questionnaire required under subsection (a) shall be determined by the Secretary with input from medical professionals.

#### **SEC. 604. TRAINING FOR PERSONNEL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS WITH RESPECT TO TOXIC-EXPOSED VETERANS.**

(a) **HEALTH CARE PERSONNEL.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall provide to health care personnel of the Department of Veterans Affairs education and training to identify, treat, and assess the impact on toxic-exposed veterans of illnesses related to toxic exposure and inform such personnel of how to ask for additional information from veterans regarding different toxic exposures.

(b) **BENEFITS PERSONNEL.**—

(1) **STANDARD CLAIMS PROCESSOR TRAINING CURRICULUM.**—

(A) **CURRICULUM.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall ensure that a standard training curriculum exists for processors of claims under the laws administered by the Secretary who review claims for disability benefits relating to



service-connected disabilities based on toxic exposure, including employees who adjudicate such claims.

(B) **MATTERS INCLUDED.**—The Secretary shall ensure that the training under subparagraph (A) includes the following explanations with respect to claims relating to toxic exposure:

(i) A lack of a presumption of service connection is not by itself sufficient to determine that service connection does not exist.

(ii) The claims adjudicator shall always consider whether direct service connection is applicable and request, as needed, an advisory medical opinion pursuant to section 1168 of title 38, United States Code, as added by section 303.

(iii) The claims adjudicator may review and consider any record of the claimant in an exposure tracking record system pursuant to section 1119 of such title, as added by section 302, but a lack of such information is not by itself sufficient to determine that such exposure did not occur or sufficient to deny the claim.

(C) **PROVISION OF TRAINING.**—The Secretary shall—

(i) provide training under subparagraph (A) to each employee described in such subparagraph not less frequently than annually; and

(ii) using the Systematic Technical Accuracy Review program, or such successor program, conduct a nationwide, quarterly, randomized review of the quality of adjudication of claims relating to toxic exposure.

(2) **STANDARD MEDICAL EXAMINER TRAINING CURRICULUM.**—

(A) **CURRICULUM.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall ensure that a standard medical training curriculum exists for medical providers who conduct examinations and provide opinions pursuant to section 1168 of title 38, United States Code, as added by section 303, regardless of whether the provider is an employee of the Department or a contractor.

(B) **STANDARDIZED APPROACH.**—The Secretary shall ensure that the curriculum established under subparagraph (A)—

(i) provides a standardized approach to conducting and providing examinations and opinions in accordance with such section 1168; and

(ii) instructs medical providers to consider, when conducting an examination or providing an opinion—

(I) relevant medical and scientific literature;

(II) the proximity, intensity, and frequency of exposure of the individual to the identified toxic exposure;

(III) medically unexplained chronic multisymptom illnesses; and

(IV) all competent and credible evidence of record.

## **TITLE VII—REGISTRIES, RECORDS, AND OTHER MATTERS**

### **SEC. 701. REGISTRY OF INDIVIDUALS EXPOSED TO PER- AND POLYFLUOROALKYL SUBSTANCES ON MILITARY INSTALLATIONS.**

(a) **ESTABLISHMENT OF REGISTRY.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall—

(A) establish and maintain a registry for eligible individuals who may have been exposed to per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (in this section referred to as “PFAS”) due to the environmental release of aqueous film-forming foam (in this section referred to as “AFFF”) on military installations to meet the requirements of military specification MIL-F-24385F;

(B) include any information in such registry that the Secretary determines necessary to ascertain and monitor the health effects of the exposure of members of the Armed Forces to PFAS associated with AFFF;

(C) develop a public information campaign to inform eligible individuals about the registry, including how to register and the benefits of registering; and

(D) periodically notify eligible individuals of significant developments in the study and treatment of conditions associated with exposure to PFAS.

(2) **COORDINATION.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall coordinate with the Secretary of Defense in carrying out paragraph (1).

(b) **REPORTS.**—

(1) **INITIAL REPORT.**—Not later than two years after the date on which the registry under subsection (a) is established, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to Congress an initial report containing the following:

(A) An assessment of the effectiveness of actions taken by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Secretary of Defense to collect and maintain information on the health effects of exposure to PFAS.

(B) Recommendations to improve the collection and maintenance of such information.

(C) Using established and previously published epidemiological studies, recommendations regarding the most effective and prudent means of addressing the medical needs of eligible individuals with respect to exposure to PFAS.

(2) **FOLLOWUP REPORT.**—Not later than five years after submitting the initial report under paragraph (1), the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to Congress a followup report containing the following:

(A) An update to the initial report submitted under paragraph (1).

(B) An assessment of whether and to what degree the content of the registry established under subsection (a) is current and scientifically up to date.

(3) **INDEPENDENT SCIENTIFIC ORGANIZATION.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall enter into an agreement with an independent scientific organization to prepare the reports under paragraphs (1) and (2).

(c) **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ADDITIONAL EXPOSURES TO BE INCLUDED.**—Not later than five years after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every five years thereafter, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, shall submit to Congress recommendations for additional chemicals with respect to which individuals exposed to such chemicals should be included in the registry established under subsection (a).

(d) **ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUAL DEFINED.**—In this section, the term “eligible individual” means any individual who, on or after a date specified by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs through regulations, served or is serving in the Armed Forces at a military installation where AFFF was used or at another location of the Department of Defense where AFFF was used.

### **SEC. 702. FORT MCLELLAN HEALTH REGISTRY.**

(a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall establish and maintain a special record to be known as the Fort McClellan Health Registry (in this section referred to as the “Registry”).

(b) **CONTENTS.**—Except as provided in subsection (c), the Registry shall include the following information:

(1) A list containing the name of each individual who, while serving as a member of the Armed Forces, was stationed at Fort McClellan, Alabama, at any time during the period beginning January 1, 1935, and ending on May 20, 1999, and who—

(A) applies for care or services from the Department of Veterans Affairs under chapter 17 of title 38, United States Code;

(B) files a claim for compensation under chapter 11 of such title on the basis of any disability which may be associated with such service;

(C) dies and is survived by a spouse, child, or parent who files a claim for dependency and indemnity compensation under chapter 13 of such title on the basis of such service;

(D) requests from the Secretary a health examination under subsection (d); or

(E) receives from the Secretary a health examination similar to the health examination referred to in subparagraph (D) and requests inclusion in the Registry.

(2) Relevant medical data relating to the health status of, and other information that the Secretary considers relevant and appropriate with respect to, each individual described in paragraph (1) who—

(A) grants to the Secretary permission to include such information in the Registry; or

(B) at the time the individual is listed in the Registry, is deceased.

(c) **INDIVIDUALS SUBMITTING CLAIMS OR MAKING REQUESTS BEFORE DATE OF ENACTMENT.**—If in the case of an individual described in subsection (b)(1) the application, claim, or request referred to in such subsection was submitted, filed, or made before the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall, to the extent feasible, include in the Registry such individual's name and the data and information, if any, described in subsection (b)(2) relating to the individual.

(d) **EXAMINATIONS.**—Upon the request of a veteran who was stationed at Fort McClellan, Alabama, at any time during the period beginning January 1, 1935, and ending on May 20, 1999, the Secretary shall provide the veteran with a health examination (including any appropriate diagnostic tests) and consultation and counseling with respect to the results of the examination and the tests.

(e) **OUTREACH.**—

(1) **ONGOING OUTREACH TO INDIVIDUALS LISTED IN REGISTRY.**—The Secretary shall, from time to time, notify individuals listed in the Registry of significant developments in research on the health consequences of potential exposure to a toxic substance or environmental hazard related to service at Fort McClellan.

(2) **EXAMINATION OUTREACH.**—The Secretary shall carry out appropriate outreach activities with respect to the provision of any health examinations (including any diagnostic tests) and consultation and counseling services under subsection (d).

(f) **CONSULTATION.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall consult with the Secretary of Defense to acquire information maintained by the Secretary of Defense that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs considers necessary to establish and maintain the Registry.

### **SEC. 703. INDEPENDENT STUDY ON INDIVIDUAL LONGITUDINAL EXPOSURE RECORD.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall enter into a contract with an independent research entity described in subsection (b) to carry out a comprehensive study of the development of the Individual Longitudinal Exposure Record, or successor system, to determine—

(1) the quality of the location data, occupational and environmental exposure data, and health surveillance data; and

(2) whether a member of the Armed Forces can be reasonably assured that any toxic exposure they experience during service in the Armed Forces will be accurately reflected in the record of the member in such Individual Longitudinal Exposure Record.

(b) **INDEPENDENT RESEARCH ENTITY.**—The entity described in this subsection is an independent research entity that is a not-for-profit entity or a federally funded research and development center with appropriate expertise and analytical capability to carry out the study required under subsection (a).

(c) **TOXIC EXPOSURE DEFINED.**—In this section, the term “toxic exposure” has the meaning given that term in section 101(37) of title 38, United States Code, as added by section 102(b).

### **SEC. 704. BIENNIAL REPORT ON INDIVIDUAL LONGITUDINAL EXPOSURE RECORD.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than one year after the date on which the Individual Longitudinal Exposure Record, or successor system,

achieves full operation capability, as determined by the Secretary of Defense, and every 180 days thereafter, the Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on—

(1) the data quality of the databases of the Department of Defense that provide the information presented in such Individual Longitudinal Exposure Record; and

(2) the usefulness of such Individual Longitudinal Exposure Record in supporting members of the Armed Forces and veterans in receiving health care and benefits from the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(b) ELEMENTS.—Each report required by subsection (a) shall include, for the period covered by the report, the following:

(1) An identification of toxic exposure events that may not be fully captured by the current systems of the Department of Defense for environmental, occupational, and health monitoring, and recommendations for how to improve those systems.

(2) An analysis of the quality of the location data used by the Department of Defense in determining toxic exposures of members of the Armed Forces and veterans, and recommendations for how to improve the quality of that location data if necessary.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS.—The term “appropriate committees of Congress” means—

(A) the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives.

(2) TOXIC EXPOSURE.—The term “toxic exposure” has the meaning given that term in section 101(37) of title 38, United States Code, as added by section 102(b).

#### **SEC. 705. CORRECTION OF EXPOSURE RECORDS BY MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES AND VETERANS.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Defense shall provide a means for members of the Armed Forces and veterans to update their records as necessary to reflect a toxic exposure by such member or veteran in the Individual Longitudinal Exposure Record, or successor system.

(b) EVIDENCE.—

(1) PROVISION OF EVIDENCE.—To update a record under subsection (a), a member of the Armed Forces or veteran, as the case may be, shall provide such evidence as the Secretary of Defense considers necessary.

(2) BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT.—In reviewing evidence provided under paragraph (1), the Secretary of Defense shall give the benefit of the doubt to the member of the Armed Forces or veteran who provided the evidence, as the case may be, in a manner that is equivalent to the benefit of the doubt required under section 5107(b) of title 38, United States Code.

(3) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary of Defense shall prescribe by regulation the evidence considered necessary under paragraph (1).

(c) TOXIC EXPOSURE DEFINED.—In this section, the term “toxic exposure” has the meaning given that term in section 101(37) of title 38, United States Code, as added by section 102(b).

#### **SEC. 706. FEDERAL CAUSE OF ACTION RELATING TO WATER AT CAMP LEJEUNE, NORTH CAROLINA.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—An individual, including a veteran (as defined in section 101 of title 38, United States Code), or the legal representative of such an individual, who resided, worked, or was otherwise exposed (including in utero exposure) for not less than 30 days during the period beginning on August 1, 1953, and ending on December 31, 1987, to water at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, that was supplied by, or on behalf of, the United States may bring an action

in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of North Carolina to obtain appropriate relief for harm that was caused by exposure to the water at Camp Lejeune.

(b) BURDENS AND STANDARD OF PROOF.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The burden of proof shall be on the party filing the action to show one or more relationships between the water at Camp Lejeune and the harm.

(2) STANDARDS.—To meet the burden of proof described in paragraph (1), a party shall produce evidence showing that the relationship between exposure to the water at Camp Lejeune and the harm is—

(A) sufficient to conclude that a causal relationship exists; or

(B) sufficient to conclude that a causal relationship is at least as likely as not.

(c) EXCLUSIVE JURISDICTION AND VENUE.—The United States District Court for the Eastern District of North Carolina shall have exclusive jurisdiction over any action filed under subsection (a), and shall be the exclusive venue for such an action. Nothing in this subsection shall impair the right of any party to a trial by jury.

(d) EXCLUSIVE REMEDY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—An individual, or legal representative of an individual, who brings an action under this section for a harm described in subsection (a), including a latent disease, may not thereafter bring a tort action against the United States for such harm pursuant to any other law.

(2) HEALTH AND DISABILITY BENEFITS RELATING TO WATER EXPOSURE.—Any award made to an individual, or legal representative of an individual, under this section shall be offset by the amount of any disability award, payment, or benefit provided to the individual, or legal representative—

(A) under—

(i) any program under the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs;

(ii) the Medicare program under title XVIII of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395 et seq.); or

(iii) the Medicaid program under title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.); and

(B) in connection with health care or a disability relating to exposure to the water at Camp Lejeune.

(e) IMMUNITY LIMITATION.—The United States may not assert any claim to immunity in an action under this section that would otherwise be available under section 2680(a) of title 28, United States Code.

(f) NO PUNITIVE DAMAGES.—Punitive damages may not be awarded in any action under this section.

(g) DISPOSITION BY FEDERAL AGENCY REQUIRED.—An individual may not bring an action under this section before complying with section 2675 of title 28, United States Code.

(h) EXCEPTION FOR COMBATANT ACTIVITIES.—This section does not apply to any claim or action arising out of the combatant activities of the Armed Forces.

(i) APPLICABILITY; PERIOD FOR FILING.—

(1) APPLICABILITY.—This section shall apply only to a claim accruing before the date of enactment of this Act.

(2) STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS.—A claim in an action under this section may not be commenced after the later of—

(A) the date that is two years after the date of enactment of this Act; or

(B) the date that is 180 days after the date on which the claim is denied under section 2675 of title 28, United States Code.

(3) INAPPLICABILITY OF OTHER LIMITATIONS.—Any applicable statute of repose or statute of limitations, other than under paragraph (2), shall not apply to a claim under this section.

#### **SEC. 7. VETERANS TOXIC EXPOSURES FUND.**

Chapter 3 is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

#### **“§ 324. Veterans Toxic Exposures Fund**

“(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is hereby established in the Treasury of the United States an account to be known as the “Veterans Toxic Exposures Fund” (the “Fund”), to be administered through the Department of Veterans Affairs, to provide for investment in the delivery of veterans’ health care, research, and benefits associated with hazardous exposure in service.

“(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Fund for fiscal year 2023 and each subsequent fiscal year such sums as are necessary to increase funding, over the fiscal year 2021 level for the Veterans Health Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs, for any expenses incident to the delivery of veterans’ health care and benefits associated with exposure to environmental hazards in service, including administrative expenses, such as claims processing and appeals, and for medical research related to hazardous exposures. Amounts appropriated to the Fund pursuant to this subsection shall be counted as direct spending under the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974 and any other Act.

“(c) ESTIMATES FOR CONGRESSIONAL CONSIDERATION.—The Secretary shall include in documents submitted to Congress in support of the President’s budget submitted pursuant to section 1105 of title 31, United States Code, detailed estimates of the sums described in subsection (b) for the applicable fiscal year.

“(d) PROCEDURES FOR ESTIMATES.—The Secretary, after consultation with the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate, may establish policies and procedures for developing the annual detailed estimates required in subsection (c).”

#### **SEC. 7. AUTHORIZATION OF ELECTRONIC NOTICE IN CLAIMS UNDER LAWS ADMINISTERED BY THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

Title 38, United States Code, is amended as follows:

(1) By striking section 5100 and inserting the following:

##### **“§ 5100. Definitions**

“In this chapter:

“(1) The term ‘claimant’ means any individual applying for, or submitting a claim for, any benefit under the laws administered by the Secretary.

“(2) The term ‘notice’ means a communication issued through means (including electronic means) prescribed by the Secretary.”

(2) In section 5104, by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(c) The Secretary may provide notice under subsection (a) electronically if a claimant (or the claimant’s representative) elects to receive such notice electronically. A claimant (or the claimant’s representative) may revoke such an election at any time, by means prescribed by the Secretary.

“(d) The Secretary shall annually—

“(1) solicit recommendations from stakeholders on how to improve notice under this section; and

“(2) publish such recommendations on a publicly available website of the Department.”

(3) In section 5104B(c), in the matter preceding paragraph (1) by striking “in writing” and inserting “to the claimant (and any representative of such claimant)”.

(4) In section 7104—

(A) in the heading, by adding “; decisions; notice” at the end; and

(B) by striking subsection (e) and inserting the following:

“(e) After reaching a decision on an appeal, the Board shall promptly issue notice (as that term is defined in section 5100 of this title) of such decision to the following:

“(1) The appellant.

“(2) Any other party with a right to notice of such decision.

“(3) Any authorized representative of the appellant or party described in paragraph (2).

“(f) The Secretary may provide notice under subsection (e) electronically if a claimant (or the claimant's representative) elects to receive such notice electronically. A claimant (or the claimant's representative) may revoke such an election at any time, by means prescribed by the Secretary.”.

(5) In section 7105(b)(1)(A), by striking “mailed” and inserting “issuance”.

(6) In section 7105A(a), by striking “mailed” and inserting “issued”.

(7) In section 7266(a), by striking “mailed” and inserting “issued”.

#### SEC. 7. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS FOR EXPANSION OF CLAIMS AUTOMATION.

There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs \$30,000,000 for fiscal year 2023 to support expected increased claims processing for newly eligible veterans pursuant to this Act and the amendments made by this Act by—

(1) supporting the automation of processing claims by the Veterans Benefits Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs;

(2) adding self-service features to the system by which individuals file claims;

(3) removing duplicative efforts regarding the processing of claims; and

(4) reducing the dependency of the Department on the legacy claim system.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The bill, as amended, is debatable for 1 hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs or their respective designees.

The gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) and the gentlewoman from Iowa (Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to insert extraneous material on H.R. 3967, as amended.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3967, as amended, the Honoring Our PACT Act of 2021.

When we sent our servicemembers into harm's way, we made a pact to care for them when they came home. But for too long, Congress and the Department of Veterans Affairs have been slow to accept responsibility and cost of that care, citing high costs or lack of absolute, scientific proof of illness connections to service. The result is a disability claims process that is cumbersome and places the burden of proof for toxic exposure on veterans themselves.

Every day more and more veterans speak out about exposure to environmental hazards and other toxic substances during their military service.

Recently, I put out a call encouraging toxic exposed veterans to share their experiences with the House Vet-

erans' Affairs Committee. We heard from thousands of veterans in 49 States. These reflections are very powerful. Mr. Speaker, and I would like to share some of them with you now.

Navy veteran Ed described how toxic exposures overwhelmed his senses. He wrote: “You could not escape the jet fuel. You could see it, smell it, and taste it.”

I heard from Marine veteran Mike who said: “Even when we weren't actively engaged in dumping items into the burn pit, we were still exposed.”

Air Force veteran Christopher R. described his dealings with VA stating: “I continue to be rejected because they say that it is impossible to prove that it is service related. I never worked with chemicals before my service or since. I feel like a nuisance to the VA health system.”

I heard from a widow of Army veteran Austin Monk who said: “No wife should have to bury her 22-year-old husband because of his exposure to unsafe conditions while in service to his country.”

□ 1230

These stories are heart-wrenching and frustrating. Our veterans are fighting their own government to grant them the care and benefits they have earned.

We should be outraged listening to these stories, and it should be clear how urgent passing the Honoring Our PACT Act is for our veterans. Veterans and veterans service organizations agree.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD letters of support from more than 42 veterans service organizations.

FEBRUARY 24, 2022.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,  
*Speaker,*  
*House of Representatives.*

Hon. KEVIN MCCARTHY,  
*Minority Leader,*  
*House of Representatives.*

DEAR SPEAKER PELOSI AND MINORITY LEADER MCCARTHY: On behalf of the American service members and veterans we represent, the undersigned representatives of our respective Veterans and Military Service Organizations call on the House to expeditiously consider and pass into law the Honoring Our PACT Act (H.R. 3967).

Throughout our history, and most recently over the course of more than 20 years of war in the post-9/11 era, service members and veterans suffered prolonged exposure to dangerous toxic substances, such as burn pits that destroyed trash, medical and human waste, chemicals, and fuel, in and around the battlefields of Iraq, Afghanistan and other places. Of the hundreds of thousands of our members who have suffered these exposures, many have returned home sick (or would become ill), and many have also died of their injuries.

Collectively, we have spent years educating Congress, national leaders, and the public on the enormous scope of the injuries faced by our community. There have been small-scale measures to boost education, training, research, and outreach to begin to address the problem. Over the last several years, many of our organizations have worked together to assemble the components of comprehensive toxic exposure legislation

that provides VA health care, a new process to determine future presumptive conditions, and provide overdue disability benefits to thousands of veterans from all wars and eras suffering from toxic exposures.

There have been a number of bills introduced in the House that address different aspects of the toxic exposures puzzle, however the Honoring Our PACT Act is the only bill that provides a truly comprehensive solution. Although many of us have supported some of these other burn pits and toxic exposure bills, none of them provides a complete and lasting solution for veterans who are or may become ill as a result of toxic exposures. Consequently, when the Honoring Our PACT Act is brought to the floor for consideration, if any such legislation is offered as an amendment or motion to restrict or substitute, rather than supplement, the underlying bill, we would urge all members to oppose such amendments or motions.

Our organizations call on the House to pass the Honoring Our PACT Act without further delay, to finally provide those who have laid their lives on the line for all Americans with the health care and benefits they need and deserve.

Sincerely,

Air Force Sergeants Association (AFSA), Association of Military Surgeons of the United States (AMSUS), Army Aviation Association of America, Burn Pits 360, California Communities Against Toxics, Cease Fire Campaign, Commissioned Officers Association of the USPHS, Disabled American Veterans (DAV), Dixon Center for Military and Veterans Services, Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States (EANGUS), Environmental Working Group (EWG), Fleet Reserve Association (FRA), Gold Star Wives of America, GO2 Foundation for Lung Cancer.

Green Beret Foundation, Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA), Jewish War Veterans of the USA, Service Women's Action Network (SWAN), Military Chaplains Association, Military Officers Association of America (MOAA), Military Order of the Purple Heart (MOPH), Military-Veterans Advocacy, Minority Veterans of America, National Association of County Veterans Service Officers, National Military Family Association (NMFA), National Veterans Legal Services Program (NVLSP), Naval Enlisted Reserve Association (NERA), Non Commissioned Officers Association (NCOA).

Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA), Reserve Organization of America (ROA), Student Veterans of America (SVA), Task Force Dagger Foundation, The American Legion, The Enlisted Association (TREA), Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS), United Soldiers and Sailors of America, United States Army Warrant Officers Association, Veteran Warriors, Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), Veterans Prostate Cancer Awareness, Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA), Wounded Warrior Project (WWP).

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank NANCY PELOSI, our Speaker, for her commitment to bring this bill to the floor. After years of diligent input from my colleagues, our staff, VA, VSOs, and toxic-exposed veterans themselves, I am confident that we are bringing the best possible version of this bill up for a vote.

The administration agrees and has stated that it “strongly supports” this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD the Statement of Administrative Policy for H.R. 3967.

## STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY

H.R. 3967—HONORING OUR PROMISE TO ADDRESS COMPREHENSIVE TOXICS (PACT) ACT—REP. TAKANO, D-CALIFORNIA AND 100 COSPONSORS

The Administration strongly supports H.R. 3967, which would expand veterans' access to health care and benefits to address the health effects of harmful environmental exposures that occurred during military service.

The President believes that our Nation has only one truly sacred obligation: to properly prepare and equip our service members when we send them into harm's way and to care for them and their families when they return home. Far too often, military service comes with a cost, and we owe it to our veterans and their families to address these consequences comprehensively. Unfortunately, it has taken decades to understand the deleterious effects of environmental exposures—leaving too many without access to the benefits and services they need.

H.R. 3967 would make changes to the definitions for who is eligible for VA health care based on presumed toxic exposure during military service, including from burn pits, radiation, or other environmental conditions. H.R. 3967 would also make changes to the Department of Veteran Affairs (VA's) process for determining presumptive service connection and mandate several research studies related to military related environmental exposures. It would also establish new registries related to exposures, which would provide new data on the long-term impacts from environmental exposures. H.R. 3697 also would allow a Federal cause of action related to contaminated water at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina and establish training requirements for health providers, and require an outreach plan to educate veterans about their eligibility for benefits and services related to toxic exposure.

The Administration looks forward to working with the Congress to enact this legislation and ensuring it is effectively implemented. We must address the toxic legacy of environmental exposures sustained by veterans during their military service and fulfill our sacred obligation to our veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors. We must also ensure that VA has the resources it needs to implement this legislation.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a letter of support from The Independence Fund.

THE INDEPENDENCE FUND,  
February 23, 2022.

Hon. MARK TAKANO,  
Chair, House Committee on Veterans Affairs,  
Washington, DC.

Hon. MIKE BOST,  
Ranking Member, House Committee on Veterans  
Affairs, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN TAKANO AND RANKING MEMBER BOST: The Independence Fund endorses the Honoring Our PACT Act (H.R. 3976) and urges its quickest adoption by the full House of Representatives. We further urge the House to engage the Senate with an appropriate legislative vehicle to get a House-Senate conference started as soon as possible to work out a final legislative solution this spring.

The Independence Fund's been proud to join with Wounded Warrior Project, Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, and numerous other veteran organizations through the Toxic Exposure in the American Military (TEAM) Coalition since August of 2020 and the initial introduction and Senate passage of the Toxic Exposure in the American Military (TEAM) Act of 2020 (S. 4393) and has applauded the serious and intensive work the House Committee on Veterans Affairs undertook over the last 16 months.

Now, with the potential House passage of H.R. 3967, we commit to engaging the Senate to pass this bill as soon as possible, and if necessary, proceed to a Conference Committee as soon as possible to ensure this bill can be enacted in this Session of Congress. We will also urge the other veteran and military serving organizations with which we work to join us in such an effort collectively.

A veteran The Independence Fund serves, Nick Ooley, joined the Army in 2007 and deployed to Iraq the following year. Today, he is unable to run, jog, or even play basketball with his 11-year-old son. As he details, "Burn pits were all over the place. We did convoy security, so we would travel to Al Taqaddum, Ramadi, Fallujah, Baghdad, all over the place. When we would drive through or get stationed in those areas, we would be breathing this smoke all the time. The smoke would be so thick during the day that the lights would come on like it was dark." But with 78% of all disability claims related to toxic exposure denied by the VA, disabled veterans are denied the help they desperately need and deserve.

While The Independence Fund will always support disabled veterans like Nick through our disabled veteran assistance programs, the presumptive condition relief and mandated health care provided in The Honoring Our PACT Act will be a crucially needed lifeline for these veterans who have given so much in the defense of our country. We salute your leadership on this issue and stand ready to assist however we can in making this the law of the land.

Very Respectfully,

BOB CAREY,  
Executive Vice President,  
Advocacy & Strategy.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, it is now time for the Members of this body to answer a simple question: Am I willing to support our troops and honor our Nation's promise to them?

This bill addresses the true cost of war, and opposing it would be a vote against our servicemembers and veterans. Such a vote would be inconsistent with the thank-yous and patriotic displays so many of my colleagues offer on Veterans Day. Veterans want action, and they deserve our action.

We made a promise to deliver comprehensive toxic exposure legislation, and I intend to keep that promise.

The Honoring our PACT Act will address the full scope of issues affecting toxic-exposed veterans' access to VA care and benefits while reforming VA's presumptive decisionmaking process. It will expand VA healthcare eligibility for over 3.5 million veterans exposed to burn pits and establish a presumption of service connection for over 23 respiratory illnesses and cancers. There is no other toxic exposure legislation in Congress like this one in scope or in soundness.

Before I close, I must emphasize something essential. We cannot renege on our responsibility to toxic-exposed veterans because of any perceived sticker shock.

Cries for offsets and pay-fors did not stop Congress from passing a \$1.9 trillion tax cut for corporations and the wealthy in 2017. Over the past 20 years, Congress and our country made the choice to spend trillions on other priorities while sending servicemembers

into harm's way at the cost of \$6.4 trillion.

We know that this Congress is willing to find money when it wants to, as it recently demonstrated by adding \$25 billion to the last National Defense Authorization Act. When our country goes to war, we don't nickel and dime the Department of Defense, and we shouldn't try to pinch pennies when it comes to covering the care for toxic-exposed veterans.

We will not stand by and be lectured about fiscal responsibility when we have a moral obligation to America's veterans. And the time to meet that obligation is now.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to H.R. 3967, the PACT Act. I wish that this were not the case. I would love to be here today standing proud alongside the chairman in support of this bill. I know Ranking Member BOST would as well.

I am new to Congress, but I understand that, historically, the Veterans' Affairs Committee would work on a bipartisan basis to advance legislation of this magnitude. The MISSION Act and the Forever GI Bill are wonderful examples of the majority and minority in the House and Senate working together in prior Congresses on a compromise that both sides could support and send to the President's desk. That is how Congress should work.

That is why they used to say that those of us on the Veterans' Affairs Committee would leave our party affiliations at the door, and that the Veterans' Affairs Committee was the most bipartisan committee in Congress. That is no longer the case under this Democrat majority. The PACT Act is a sad example of that.

My fellow Republicans and I want to work with the majority to create a fair and consistent pathway for healthcare benefits for toxic-exposed veterans. This is an issue we care deeply about, for which I have a personal association, and have made our top priority in the 117th Congress.

But the majority has consistently refused to meaningfully communicate with us on this bill. In fact, the majority significantly rewrote major portions and components of the PACT Act less than 2 weeks ago and refused to even discuss those changes with those of us in the minority.

Because we did not work together to resolve our differences, the bill has serious flaws that we were unable to resolve. Already, the manager's amendment would extend benefits to more veterans without scientific justification, showing just how slippery a slope this bill would set.

As an alternative, I support creating a fair and consistent process for the VA to decide whether benefits are warranted for certain military toxic exposure events.

VA should base this decision on criteria that weighs the strength of scientific evidence supporting a link between the development of a condition and toxic exposure. In fact, for the past 2 years during the pandemic, we have heard repeatedly from the opposite side about following the science.

If the VA determines that there is at least a 50 percent chance that these veterans' disabilities are linked to toxic exposure, then VA should grant benefits on a presumptive basis.

The PACT Act attempts to create such a framework, but I believe more discussion is needed to determine if it is the best path forward. That is especially important since the VA began piloting its own program for deciding whether there is a scientific link between a disability and toxic exposure last year.

Under VA's model, certain Gulf war and post-9/11 veterans who were exposed to airborne hazards and develop asthma, sinusitis, and rhinitis became eligible for benefits last September. And just this past week, VA announced it will provide compensation to certain veterans who are diagnosed with nine rare respiratory cancers.

VA's decisions were based on science. However, it is unclear if all the conditions under Chairman TAKANO's bill would meet the scientific threshold under his framework or under the VA's.

Furthermore, the PACT Act could also flood VA with so many new mandates that veterans already receiving care and benefits wait longer. Veterans wait too long for VA services right now. I hear frequently from veterans in Iowa who can't get the care they need, are waiting months and, in some States, even years for the benefits they have earned. I don't know of a Member in this body who can't say the same thing.

Making those veterans wait even longer is unacceptable, and it could be unprecedented where the claims process is concerned.

In 2013, the disability claims backlog peaked at 600,000 pending claims. Veterans were waiting years to receive an initial decision of their claim, and then, if it was denied, they were waiting even longer while the VA processed their appeal.

VA has made some improvements to how disability claims are processed since 2013, but the Department is still years away from developing the information technology needed to truly expedite claims processing.

If the PACT Act were enacted, VA estimates the disability claims backlog could reach over 1.5 million claims by the end of fiscal year 2023. That is more than double the height of the backlog in 2013.

If veterans were waiting years for their benefits 9 years ago, imagine how long they would have to wait today for a backlog that is more than two times the size it was then. That is completely unreasonable.

The PACT Act is also unacceptable for taxpayers. CBO estimates the PACT

Act would require over \$300 million in new government spending. Not a penny of those costs are offset.

Additionally, some of the amendments we will be voting on would increase the costs by millions of dollars in new mandatory spending on top of that.

You will hear some say that this is just the cost of war. Anyone who has served, or has a loved one who serves, like I have, and do, know what war costs. They also know that veterans pay taxes, too. They also know that veterans have children and grandchildren whose futures they don't want to be anymore burdened with debt than they already are.

The PACT Act costs more than the combined discretionary budgets of nine Cabinet-level departments. Think about that. And then think about inflation and our national debt, which is already skyrocketing and is causing American taxpayers to pinch pennies.

We are not doing right by our veterans by being fiscally irresponsible in their name, and I say that as a veteran myself.

Finally, there is no clear or quick path forward in the Senate for the PACT Act. In comparison, we could send legislation to the President's desk today that would help sick veterans get the care they need.

The Health Care for Burn Pit Veterans Act would let toxic-exposed post-9/11 combat veterans enroll in the VA healthcare system. It is bipartisan, and it has already passed the Senate last month.

I understand the majority would like to go to conference over the Health Care for Burn Pit Veterans Act and the PACT Act, but I also understand that the majority supports the Health Care for Burn Pit Veterans Act because they included it as a provision in the Rules Committee print of the PACT Act.

If we all agree that the Health Care for Burn Pit Veterans Act is a good policy, why would we delay its enactment?

Every day that the House fails to send it to the President is another day that veterans are deprived of lifesaving care. Nothing could be more wrong-headed than that.

The Health Care for Burn Pit Veterans Act is the correct first step toward this process. It will deliver needed healthcare to toxic-exposed veterans and buy us the time to work on a bipartisan, bicameral basis to deliver other benefits and services to them down the line. They would at least have healthcare now.

We should have done this throughout this congressional session, but we haven't even started yet. Sick veterans should not pay the price for our inaction.

Rather than pass the PACT Act in the House, with its many flaws and an extremely high likelihood of dying in the Senate, we must pass the Health Care for Burn Pit Veterans Act today.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor and privilege to yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI), a person who has done more for veterans in modern times than any other leader of this body.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding and for his kind words, which I accept on behalf of our working in a bipartisan way for our veterans over the years, Democrats and Republicans. And I thank the chairman for his extraordinary leadership, both in this case and earlier for our veterans, completing our Agent Orange responsibilities to our veterans.

As well, I thank Congressman RUIZ, a doctor and a Member of Congress who has been a champion on this issue, and ELAINE LURIA, a veteran and a Member of Congress who has been so instrumental in bringing this legislation to the floor.

When the President spoke last night about meeting the needs of our veterans when it came to the burn pits, he received almost a unanimous standing ovation for that. It was very encouraging to see the Congress of the United States, House and Senate, Democrats and Republicans, recognize their obligation to our men and women in uniform.

It is important to note that over the past generation, over 3 million of our courageous Americans have answered the call to serve and have donned the uniform to protect our freedoms as heroic Americans, just as people have done since our founding.

From the deserts of Iraq to the mountains of Afghanistan—I was hearing this morning about Kandahar—and on bases and in military theaters around the world, these heroes have risked their lives to fight the enemy and yet, tragically, have had to face another deadly threat due to exposure to burn pits and other toxic substances.

We always say about our military on the battlefield that we leave no soldier behind, and when they come home, we leave no veteran behind. Instead of receiving comprehensive, timely care and benefits, sometimes they are forced to confront a disability claims process that is nearly impossible to navigate. That is why the Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act, the PACT Act, finally, faithfully fulfills that pledge now and into the future, that we will leave no veteran behind.

□ 1245

The budget costs of it are a cost of war. When we decide that we need to engage and initiate military action, we should understand that the cost is not just in our defense budget but also in our veterans' budget when they come home.

Frankly, the cost of this bill is a fraction, if we are talking budget, of the cost of the Republican tax bill that they passed in 2017, which added \$2 trillion to the national debt. I don't hear

anybody complaining on the other side of the aisle about what impact that had on veterans and their concerns about the fiscal soundness of the United States.

So let's just put it to rest: If it is a cost that we must have for our veterans—and this has been thoroughly researched, and others will speak to that—then we cannot say we can't afford it. It isn't about the price. It is about the value of what we get for this.

In the last 20 years, the VA has seen over a 60 percent increase in rates of cancer due to toxic exposure. Eighty-six percent of veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan report being exposed to the toxic fumes of burn pits, and 88 percent of those exposed said they were experiencing symptoms that could be related to that.

Potentially up to 3.5 million veterans deployed post-9/11 may have been exposed to toxic fumes and substances. Despite this reality, nearly 75 percent of burn-pit-related disability claims were denied, Mr. Speaker.

Too often, the VA and Congress have said it is just too expensive to care for, and there just isn't enough proof. The result of this negligence has been tragic. Thousands of veterans and families have been forced to suffer, including heroes like one I will quote, Staff Sergeant Wesley Black.

Staff Sergeant Black was a Purple Heart hero who survived two tours in Iraq and Afghanistan. In November, he died at the age of 36 from colon cancer tied to toxic exposure from burn pits, leaving behind his wife and new baby.

After serving his country with distinction, Sergeant Black should have been able to retire happily, with pride. Instead, he spent his final days fighting for the reforms contained in this legislation so that no current or future veteran would be forced to endure the same horror that he and his family did.

Staff Sergeant Wesley Black, before his passing, said: It is too late for me, but it is not too late for the next veteran who walks down the halls of the VA and goes in and complains about the signs and symptoms.

We must make sure it is not too late for other veterans, I say, and when we send our servicemen and servicewomen into harm's way, we care for them when they come home.

This is particularly important to me, because a long time ago, long before I was in Congress, in 1981, I went and sat with veterans in California, with Dick Gregory, who was making a big association with the cause for Agent Orange, in 1981, California, veterans having a hunger strike. Dick Gregory knew about hunger strikes from the civil rights movement, and he was associating himself with them and instructing them on how to survive a hunger strike, and I had the privilege of being with them.

Little did I know at that time, it would take decades to address their Agent Orange concerns. And it wasn't even complete until Chairman TAKANO

did so with the Navy legislation that he passed.

We cannot let that much time go by. That would be shameful to our country.

Let us also thank Mr. CARTWRIGHT, who also included in his package the Camp Lejeune Justice Act. Anyone who has heard from those families coming from Camp Lejeune, not just the servicemembers but their family members, who have been damaged related to injuries incurred while serving at Camp Lejeune. The list goes on.

Again, thanks to Chairman TAKANO, Congressman RAUL RUIZ, Congresswoman ELAINE LURIA, and Congressman MATT CARTWRIGHT. I thank everyone who has worked so hard to bring this to the floor. I want to also thank Senator TESTER, with whom Chairman TAKANO and our committee have worked closely.

We share a goal. We have to find the complete package so that it is comprehensive and fulfills our responsibilities.

Others will go into the particulars of it. I want to also salute the distinguished Secretary of the VA, Denis McDonough, for the attention that he has paid to making sure what we do honors the promise of the PACT Act, so that the bill is written in a way that delivers in a timely fashion to our veterans.

I could not have been more excited when the President of the United States included this important initiative in his remarks, not only as legislation but in the larger issue of what it means to our country, how we value our veterans and how we want to pass this legislation and get it to his desk soon so it will be a comfort to our veterans and their families.

On the battlefield, we leave no soldier behind. When they come home, we leave no veterans behind.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I could not agree more that we can act today, and we can forward legislation to the desk of the President for his signature by passing the Health Care for Burn Pit Veterans Act today, so that there is not another Sergeant Wesley Black who is denied healthcare while the VA processes his claims.

We would be more than delighted to help the President in honoring his initiative, as he stated last night in the State of the Union, by today passing the Health Care for Burn Pit Veterans Act.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. LEVIN), my good friend, who serves as the chair of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity.

Mr. LEVIN of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman TAKANO for his leadership.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the Honoring our PACT Act.

All too often, many veterans hear the words "thank you for your service" but don't see enough action behind those words.

Sadly, that has been true for millions of veterans who were exposed to toxic substances during their service and are now suffering from related health conditions.

While they defended our country, they were exposed to burn pits, PFAS chemicals, and more, but we failed to hold up our end of the bargain to care for them when they returned home.

In the case of Vietnam veterans, many who were exposed to Agent Orange, were forced to wait more than 40 years before they saw proper benefits.

For too long, the burden of proof has been on the veteran to show that their illness is a result of toxic exposure they experienced during their service. For too long, veterans have been told that it is too expensive to cover the range of health issues that they have as a result of their toxic exposure. That is wrong, and we must do better for our veterans.

With the Honoring our PACT Act, we can do right by our veterans. This includes finally presuming that if they were exposed to toxic substances during their service and are now experiencing one of 23 respiratory illnesses and cancers, then that illness is as a result of their exposure, and they are owed proper access to benefits and care through the VA.

I also want to highlight what I hope will become a key piece of this bill, an amendment I offered to authorize Federal grants for county veterans service officers who help veterans and their families understand resources at their disposal, file benefit claims, and represent veterans in VA hearings.

County veterans service officers are often veterans' best allies in navigating red tape within the VA and securing the benefits that veterans have earned, which will be particularly important for the 3.5 million veterans who may be eligible for new benefits and care as a result of this legislation.

The amendment is similar to my Commitment to Veteran Support and Outreach Act, which I introduced with a bipartisan group last year. I hope to see it move forward as part of our Honoring our PACT Act today.

As I said, this legislation is our opportunity to put real action behind our words. Saying "thank you for your service" has never been enough. It is time to fulfill the promises we made to our troops and invest in the care and benefits they deserve.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to vote "yes."

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), the esteemed majority leader of this House.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman TAKANO not only for yielding



time, but much more importantly, I thank him for the extraordinary work he does on behalf of the Armed Forces and for its veterans. He is tireless in his advocacy of veterans' interest.

I meet with him every Wednesday in the chairman's meeting. He is always speaking up about how we need to continue our focus on the needs of our veterans who served our country so heroically, whether they went overseas or not.

Some of the veterans that we are talking about today were not overseas when they contracted a disease or an illness as a result of toxic substances. They were here in America. There is a poet who says: They also serve who stand and wait ready to serve, ready to be deployed to the point of the spear.

Mr. Speaker, you and I are old enough—I don't want to be too harsh on the Speaker—but to remember the song: When Johnny comes marching home again, hurray, hurray, the boys will shout, the girls will cheer, and the women, they will all turn out.

One of the problems we have seen, though, after that cheering, that after that parade, after that exultation, is that memories are short. As time goes by, some of our veterans, sadly, tragically, and wrongfully, have been forgotten.

This bill says we do not forget. This bill says we will be there for you, and, yes, we will be there even if there is a substantial cost to it.

This is a defense cost. In my view, the veterans cost ought to be in the defense budget, and it ought to be there because that is what we are all enthusiastic about spending money on. Veterans need to be and are our first priority.

I thank the chairman for his focus and for his action. He has long been a champion of our veterans and their well-being.

I also thank Representative RUIZ and Representative LURIA, who is sitting here with us, who have worked very hard on this legislation. Mrs. LURIA, from Virginia, is a retired commander from the United States Navy. She and her husband commanded a ship. Dr. RUIZ has been on the front line of illness, the front line as an emergency physician, and knows full well the psychological and physical effects of toxic material to the well-being of individuals. I thank Dr. RUIZ and Commander LURIA for their work on this bill.

Our veterans served with honor and routinely went above and beyond the call of duty in their defense of our Nation. Many of them risked their lives; not everybody, there were some that were support, and without their support those at the point of the spear could not have been successful.

We have a responsibility, Mr. Speaker, a moral responsibility, to care for our veterans when they return home and ensure that they receive the treatment they deserve.

When we send our servicemembers to war, when we recruit them, when we

put them in a position by order and they become ill because of where they are, because of either negligent or unknowing actions, unknowing to the extent we don't know the adverse effects that they caused, whatever the situation, a soldier's exposure is our responsibility.

A soldier's exposure to burn pits and other toxic substances during their service has been shown to be connected to a greatly increased risk of cancer and respiratory diseases. There is no doubt about that.

The legislation before us would expand veterans' healthcare access and benefits to address the effects of those toxic exposures that occurred during their military service.

Mr. Speaker, you and I both know we asked our veterans to go to battle for America, and they answered the call. When they return home, veterans should not have to go to battle against red tape to receive the medical treatment and benefits they have earned through their service.

□ 1300

They ought to be able to access care for the physical and mental wounds they carry without impediment or delay. All of us have gotten cases where there have been weeks, months, years that veterans have waited for benefits that they deserve under law, and as a moral responsibility of our government.

We thank our veterans for their service. As I said, we cheer and shout and turn out. But this is our responsibility. This is not about cheering or shouting. This is about doing what we ought to do for those who were injured in the defense of our Nation and our freedom. This is our opportunity to keep our promise to put our veterans first and truly give them our highest respect.

Again, I thank my friend, Chairman TAKANO. I thank all the members of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and all those veterans who don't forget those who come after them. I thank Mr. TAKANO for his leadership, and I urge my colleagues from both sides of the aisle to join in passing this bill with a strong bipartisan support.

Our President talked about bipartisanship. I talked to Mr. SCALISE about being the loyal opposition. Not loyal to Democrats or Democrat leaders, but loyal to our country. Being loyal to our country means being loyal to those who served and preserved the freedoms that we enjoy, this home of the free and land of the brave. I think it is the opposite way around, but we get the point. Brave and free go together. Let us not forget. Let's pass this bill.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, anyone who has served or has a loved one who serves, like I have and do, knows the cost of war good and well.

Veterans pay taxes, too. Veterans also have children and grandchildren

that they don't want to burden with debt. The Honoring our PACT Act costs more than the combined discretionary budgets of nine Cabinet-level departments: Transportation, Commerce, Homeland Security, State, HUD, Interior, Justice, Energy, and Labor.

We shouldn't dismiss those massive costs so easily. Just as we have a moral responsibility to care for our veterans, we have a moral responsibility to understand the real-world consequences that we can already see in skyrocketing inflation and national debt. Congress should have to pay our bills just like our constituents do.

I am not downplaying the importance of benefits. Getting the Health Care for Burn Pit Veterans Act signed into law may be the first step in this fight, but it would be a lifesaving one. It does no good to have benefits if you are not alive to have them. Republicans invited Jim Price, a toxic-exposed veteran and widower of one, to testify, and he says it better than I could. In Jim's words, "Benefits mean nothing if you are no longer alive."

Chairman TAKANO acknowledged last week that he has not even started talking to the Senate about a compromise on this bill. That means we are months away from a deal, if we can even find one. Meanwhile, veterans could receive lifesaving healthcare now. Some veterans don't have that long to wait. They need that healthcare now.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New Hampshire (Mr. PAPPAS), my good friend who serves as chair of the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations for the Veterans' Affairs Committee.

Mr. PAPPAS. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman TAKANO for yielding and for his leadership on this issue, which answers the call of our Nation's veterans, their advocates, and our veterans service organizations.

I rise in support of the Honoring our PACT Act, which makes good on this Nation's promise to veterans. It is well past the time that we address the impacts of toxic exposure that have been endured by members of our military. I am glad that we are taking meaningful, comprehensive action today.

I am also pleased that this legislation includes a bill that I introduced, the PFAS Registry Act. PFAS chemicals have contaminated the environment and drinking water sources of hundreds of military bases across the country, including Pease Air Force Base in my district. These forever chemicals persist in the environment and the body and are linked to serious health conditions, including cancer.

This provision will give military servicemembers and veterans access to health information, research updates, and other resources to help protect public health and provide relief to those who have been exposed to PFAS.



The Honoring our PACT Act will help veterans already suffering from the impacts of toxic exposure. We also must do more to reduce the risk that more servicemembers will be exposed. That is why I have also submitted an amendment that will require our government to proactively raise awareness of the dangers of toxic exposure to Active Duty personnel.

These provisions will require DOD and VA to create a strategy for awareness and prevention that will protect Active Duty servicemembers from harm and save lives.

Our men and women in uniform already face numerous threats to life and limb for their service. We must minimize risks that environmental and toxic hazards pose and provide the care, benefits, and support that these veterans have earned. It is our solemn responsibility.

Mr. Speaker, I urge swift passage of my amendment as well as the underlying legislation.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, section 706 comes from H.R. 6482, which was referred to the Judiciary Committee, not the Veterans' Affairs Committee. H.R. 6482 has not gone through the regular order of this Congress. This is another blatant example of the Democrat majority pushing through legislation without careful consideration of the impact it may have on the Federal Government. Moreover, this provision is a departure from past precedent because it would allow veterans to sue the United States for a disability incurred in military service. This type of change would not simply be air dropped into a bill without careful consideration within this committee.

The VA estimates that the PACT Act will cause an unprecedented backlog of over 1.5 million disability claims. This will lead to longer wait times for veterans and put a strain on DVA resources and personnel. An increase in claims decisions is likely to result in an increase in appeals, which will add to the appeals backlog.

All veterans, not just toxic-exposed veterans, will be forced to wait months or years for a final decision on their disability claim or appeal. This is a big risk to take when there is little to no science backing the benefits expansion under this bill.

And our moral responsibilities? What will I say to the veterans in my district who could get healthcare now if we refuse to consider a bill that will pass?

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Virginia (Mrs. LURIA), my good friend and cosponsor of H.R. 3967. She is the chair of the Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs Subcommittee and also a veteran herself and former commander of a naval surface ship.

Mrs. LURIA. Mr. Speaker, as a 20-year veteran myself, it is an honor to

stand before you today. I would say that the urgency of what our veterans are facing should not be lost on this body: Autoimmune disorders, cancer, chronic disease, respiratory issues, infertility, and organ failure are just a few in a lengthy list of conditions associated with toxins during military service.

Why should our veterans, who risked their lives on the battlefield, now have to battle for their healthcare when they return home?

There should be no question of our commitment to the veterans who voluntarily served our Nation without hesitation. This body should not hesitate to pass this legislation, the Honoring our PACT Act. I am proud to serve a district that has such a strong military and veteran presence.

Nearly one out of every six people in Virginia's Second Congressional District is a veteran and even more of their family members. Many of those veterans come from the Gulf war era, with 42 percent of them having served in the post-9/11 era. My presence at this podium today reconfirms my unwavering commitment to all of our constituents who depend on the passage of this legislation to get the healthcare that they deserve from toxic exposure.

Let me be clear. Veterans have earned the right to accessible VA healthcare. As such, the choice is clear that we need to pass the Honoring our PACT Act. Our work on this vital legislation has been bipartisan, and it incorporates two bills that I have introduced: The COVENANT Act, which recognized the toxic exposure of so many of our veterans and established their eligibility for healthcare. Furthermore, we have introduced in this legislation a provision that brings the VA healthcare notifications into the 21st century, allowing the Secretary of the VA to notify our veterans of their disability determinations electronically, something that is long overdue and has been coordinated with and requested by the Secretary of the VA.

Let me say again that as a 20-year veteran myself, I support this legislation, and I want to get this healthcare to all those veterans who served and those who desperately need it.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, how much time do I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from Iowa has 18 minutes remaining.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the benefits provided under this bill have little to no scientific basis. For example, in 2020, the National Academies reviewed 11 of the 24 burn pit-related conditions in the bill but could not establish a link between exposure to burn pits and those 11 conditions. The other 13 conditions were not reviewed, which further proves the point that more research is needed.

It is not fair to provide benefits to select veterans under this bill while tell-

ing other veterans to wait for the science. Instead, there needs to be a fair and consistent process to decide if there is enough evidence supporting the extension of benefits to a condition that may be linked to toxic exposure.

This bill sets a dangerous precedent that we cannot afford to maintain for the next group of toxic-exposure veterans wanting benefits with no scientific support. May I also add that veterans need not be in a battle for healthcare if we pass today the Health Care for Burn Pit Veterans Act, which has already passed in the Senate.

We have received zero assurance from the VA that the PACT Act can be implemented without disrupting services to veterans. I hear every day from veterans who cannot get care in a timely manner through the VA right now. The PACT Act would make millions more veterans eligible for care through the same system, much more than the Health Care for Burn Pit Veterans Act would, and of course that will have implications for access. Even VA's own providers have expressed concern about the impact an influx of new patients without accommodations and resources will have, clogging up an already overburdened system.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire as to how much time I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from California has 15½ minutes remaining.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. MRVAN), my good friend who serves as chair of the Subcommittee on Technology Modernization on the Veterans' Affairs Committee.

Mr. MRVAN. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise today in support of Honoring our PACT Act.

Respectfully, the impact of this piece of legislation will be veterans receive world-class healthcare.

As I meet with veterans and veteran groups from northwest Indiana, I continue to be grateful every day for the selfless service and sacrifice by our veterans and their families.

Just yesterday, less than 24 hours ago, a veteran representing the DAV, came to me who had two forms of cancer, who was advocating not only for himself but other veterans to make sure they received the care and the necessity of care that they deserve, as we have a responsibility to ensure that all veterans receive world-class healthcare when they return home from protecting our freedoms and defending our democracy.

I commend Chairman TAKANO for his consistent advocacy and leadership to bring this measure to the floor today.

I appreciate the announcement yesterday that the VA will process claims for toxic-exposed veterans with certain rare respiratory cancers. More must be done. I encourage all my colleagues to vote for the Honoring our PACT Act so

that a regular and transparent process is established to ensure that all issues facing toxic-exposed veterans are comprehensively addressed.

As I stated when I opened, the impact of this legislation is that veterans receive the world-class healthcare they deserve.

□ 1315

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I applaud the VA for initiating a review of these nine rare cancers to determine if they are linked to airborne hazard exposure while deployed. I am looking forward to hearing about the VHA's research, which supported the expansion of benefits to these Gulf war and post-9/11 veterans.

Likewise, I am interested in learning more about the number of veterans who would be impacted by this decision and the effect it will have on the VA.

However, these nine cancers are only a subset of the conditions included in Chairman TAKANO's bill. I believe more scientific research is needed to determine if additional disabilities are linked to airborne hazard exposure.

Both the majority and the minority want world-class healthcare for our veterans, and thus, it underscores our concern with this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. RUIZ), my good friend and neighbor in California, someone who has authored a great big section of this bill on our presumptives, a member of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee and an active member on the Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs Subcommittee.

Mr. RUIZ. Mr. Speaker, as we stand here right now, our servicemembers have returned home from the battlefield only to become delayed casualties of war due to their battlefield exposure to toxic burn pits.

My constituents, Jennifer Kepner and Alejandro Camacho, both developed cancers from the burn pits' toxic smoke containing carcinogens they breathed day in and day out while serving our country. Jen Kepner died from pancreatic cancer, and Alejandro Camacho suffers from testicular cancer.

Let me repeat that. They got sick because they were exposed to burn pits' toxic smoke while doing their duty for our country.

To make matters worse, both Jennifer and Alejandro were turned down when applying for benefits because the VA said that there wasn't enough evidence to link their illness to their service.

To not give our veterans the proper care and benefits they earned and rightly deserve is a dereliction of our Nation's duty.

That is why I introduced the Presumptive Benefits for War Fighters Exposed to Burn Pits and Other Toxins Act.

It would create a presumption of service connection for 23 illnesses, including cancers related to service near burn pits, and it has been included in the Honoring our PACT Act.

My bill is the very soul of the Honoring our PACT Act. It would take the burden off of our veterans to prove that they are sick as a result of their service by presuming the reason they were diagnosed with this illness is because of their service near burn pits.

Now is the time to fix this, and anything short of including all 23 of these illnesses is not good enough. The Health Care for Burn Pit Veterans Act is not good enough. It will shortchange our veterans. It is like telling a pneumonia patient who needs antibiotics for the cure that, hey, listen, let's just give you Tylenol, call it a day, and we have taken care of the patient. That is medical negligence, and that is not what we are going to do to our veterans.

We cannot have another Agent Orange in our generation and "delay until dead" as our Vietnam veterans have said.

So I urge my colleagues to support passage of this lifesaving bipartisan bill. I urge them to stop the medical negligence and the dereliction of duty to come together as a country and do what is right because the science is there. It is not a secret. Carcinogens cause cancer. Burn pits' smoke have carcinogens. Our burn pits veterans are delayed casualties from cancers.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the veterans who are sick may not be able to get benefits immediately under this bill since they will be waiting for the VA to process their claims during a 1.5 million-claim backlog.

There is also no guarantee VA will get it right the first time. The VA does not have a great track record of accurately processing claims while working to address a massive backlog.

For example, during the Obama administration, VA took shortcuts to artificially reduce the backlog, such as the provisional denial program. We should be focused on getting veterans the care they need now to recover while continuing to work on the best path forward to other benefits.

Additionally, without a clear path forward in the Senate on the PACT Act, veterans will continue to wait while Congress works to get it right.

The revisions to the presumptive framework in Title 2 were unveiled less than 2 weeks ago. We have not had a chance to discuss these changes publicly with stakeholders and VA. As such, it is unclear if the changes made by the Rules Committee Print version would improve or hinder VA's efforts to establish a consistent scientific process for deciding when to extend benefits based on toxic exposure. And by doing so, as my colleague suggests, we may, in fact, not go down a pathway

determining why a veteran is ill and what other exposures may have caused their illness.

I believe more time is needed to refine the presumptive framework in this bill to ensure that veterans will receive a fair look at which conditions are linked to toxic exposure. We can pass the Health Care for Burn Pit Veterans Act now as the first step to get these veterans the healthcare that they need as we continue to develop a bipartisan, bicameral way forward on the presumptive framework.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BISHOP), my very good friend who serves as a subcommittee chair on the Appropriations Committee and also a former member of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the Honoring our PACT Act, which will ensure that veterans who have been exposed to toxic substances, materials, or environments during their military service, particularly toxic burn pits and Agent Orange, will receive the care and benefits they deserve.

Exposure to these toxins has led to devastating health conditions suffered by veterans, including neurological disorders, pulmonary diseases, rare forms of cancer, and many other conditions.

In the past, the government has been too slow to recognize the link between exposure to toxic substances and the medical problems that veterans have dealt with when they returned home.

As a result, veterans and their families have been denied benefits and much-needed disability compensation to deal with the health effects of these toxins.

The Honoring our PACT Act would correct these errors and renew our solemn commitment to our Nation's veterans.

I urge my colleagues to support the Honoring our PACT Act to ensure that our country fulfills Abraham Lincoln's promise to care for him and her who shall have borne the battle.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, the concerns the minority had with this bill were laid out during the markup of the PACT Act, as well as the roundtable last month. We did not see the revised text until it was published by the Rules Committee.

At the ranking member's direction, the minority staff were willing to work through these concerns with your staff line-by-line, but this was rebuffed.

The minority staff was also told that any proposed changes to the scope of the bill would not be accepted.

It is clear that the majority was not willing to address our concerns with this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Texas

(Mr. CASTRO), my good friend who serves on the Education and Labor Committee and is a member of the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence and is a subcommittee chair on the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I proudly represent what is known as "Military City U.S.A.," San Antonio, Texas, the home to hundreds, if not thousands, of veterans who, like others across the country, were exposed to open-air burn pits whose lives have been ruined, and for some, it has cost them their life.

We have to stand up for our veterans the way they stood up for our country when they were on Active Duty. Yet, what I keep hearing from Republicans is that there is not enough information. There is not enough money.

Mr. Speaker, how often do you hear people around here ask whether it is too expensive to buy a tank, whether it is too expensive to buy a jet or an aircraft carrier. Yet, when it comes to our men and women in uniform, who go risk their lives on behalf of our country and our allies, the question coming from Republicans is whether it is too expensive.

Why don't you just tell them that it is too goddamned expensive to save their lives? Why don't you tell them that they are not worth the money? Because what you are saying is that you want tax cuts for billionaires and cancer for veterans.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, the question from Republicans is why not pass a bill that has already passed the Senate that would give access to lifesaving healthcare to our veterans now?

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Mrs. HAYES), my very good friend who serves on the Education and Labor Committee with me and as is the subcommittee chair on the Agriculture Committee.

Mrs. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to urge my colleagues to support the Honoring our PACT Act, which upholds the promise we made to servicemembers that we would care for them if they became sick or wounded while fighting to protect this country.

This legislation recognizes the full range of military toxic exposure that servicemembers have faced.

This monumental package also includes my bill, the Palomares Veterans Act, which would remove barriers to benefits and compensation for those veterans who responded to one of the largest nuclear disasters in history.

Over 55 years ago, a B-52 bomber collided with aircraft over the Spanish village of Palomares, causing radiation exposure to more than 1,600 U.S. airmen who had no protection when they responded to the crash.

Decades later, many of these airmen are suffering and dying from health conditions that likely came from ra-

dioactive material. But the VA still does not count Palomares as a radiation risk event or provide these veterans with benefits or disability.

My bill, the Honoring our PACT Act, would address this, ensuring these veterans get the healthcare and benefits they deserve and ensuring their surviving spouses and children are eligible for benefits.

The job of Congress is to appropriate funds, yet whenever we want to help people, my Republican colleagues say no. If we are not willing to support our veterans, what are we willing to support?

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, at this time I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. LOIS FRANKEL), my good friend who is a valued member of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, serving on the Subcommittee on Health.

Ms. LOIS FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding and for his leadership.

Mr. Speaker, I am blessed that my son, Ben, a Marine war veteran, returned safely from tours in Iraq and Afghanistan. Ben is now a small business owner, and he has even given me two beautiful grandsons. And listen, not every family is as lucky.

Our servicemen and -women put their lives on the line for our Nation, and yet for too long, countless veterans have unknowingly been exposed to environmental hazards and toxic waste, like burn pits, during their duty. And then they come back home with long-term health impacts like cancer, infertility, and breathing issues.

Mr. Speaker, they deserve better. We owe them better. And here is the thing: If we are willing to send our troops to war, we must also be willing to care for their health upon return, and this includes the 80,000 veterans in my home area of Palm Beach County.

It is time for Congress to honor this commitment and pass the Honoring our PACT Act to provide access to VA healthcare to millions of veterans exposed to toxic substances.

The best way to thank our veterans for their service is with action. I urge my colleagues to pass this important bill.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I would like to inquire as to how much time I have remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has 7½ minutes remaining.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, Republicans agree with Democrats about how important it is to help veterans suffering from toxic exposure. However, there is nothing bipartisan about how the majority has gone about this.

The majority has consistently refused to meaningfully communicate with us on this bill. We are seeing similar refusal to work together in good faith on other fronts, as well.

This is the third controversial veterans bill that has gone before the Rules Committee this year alone.

In 2017, when this committee had a Republican chairman, The New York Times called the Veterans' Affairs Committee "the most bipartisan in Congress." That is not the case in the House anymore, not since the Democrat majority took charge.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. MENG), my very good friend who serves on the House Appropriations Committee.

□ 1330

Ms. MENG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in favor of H.R. 3967, Honoring our PACT Act, authored by my friend and esteemed colleague, Chairman TAKANO.

This important bill includes the text of my bill, the Mark Takai Atomic Veterans Healthcare Parity Act, named after our dear, late friend and colleague, Representative Mark Takai.

H.R. 3967 would permit veterans who participated in the nuclear cleanup of Enewetak Atoll in the Western Pacific to be treated as radiation-exposed veterans and receive service-connected compensation benefits.

Current law only covers servicemembers who participated in active nuclear tests and not those who participated in the cleanup. With the passage of this bill, Congress will finally right this wrong.

Mr. Speaker, once again, I thank Chairman MARK TAKANO for his tremendous leadership on this legislation, and I urge my colleagues to vote for the passage of H.R. 3967.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Guam (Mr. SAN NICOLAS), my good friend who serves on the Committee on Financial Services and the Committee on Natural Resources.

Mr. SAN NICOLAS. Mr. Speaker, imagine a system that frustrates you being weaponized in order to deny you the care that you are entitled to and that you should be entitled to in this country. That is what we do when we say that the inefficiencies of the VA system is reason for us not to pass this bill.

This bill is going to do so much good for veterans who deserve it, and it is going to do so much good for particular veterans who served in Guam and were exposed to Agent Orange. It is the only bill right now that is going to get that done.

Mr. Speaker, the late Lonnie Kilpatrick died from his exposure to Agent Orange. My bipartisan colleague, GUS BILIRAKIS, and I introduced a bill to address that exposure. This legislation that we are talking about today, the Honoring our PACT Act, will get that done.

Let's not weaponize the frustrations of the VA to prevent those kinds of solutions. Let's get this done for our veterans. It is about time.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from the State of California (Mr. RUIZ), my good friend and colleague, the author of the provisions on the 23 presumptions.

Mr. RUIZ. Mr. Speaker, I have been hearing these arguments or these pleas that our colleagues on the other side agree with the sentiment, that they agree that they want to take care of this. Well, those are just words. Whether they agree will be demonstrated by their votes. Those are actions.

I am hearing the same excuses that our Vietnam veterans heard when they were dying from Agent Orange and pleading for help, the excuse that the science is not there; we need more time; oh, it costs too much.

Well, listen here, the science is there. As a medical professional, I reviewed the science. The scientific studies were flawed. They did not ask the right questions. And there is enough evidence from other extrapolated data that shows that carcinogens can cause cancer, that heavy toxic metals in your lungs can cause pulmonary fibrosis. We have to make sure that if the burn pits are illegal in the United States, they should be illegal everywhere else because of this science.

Then we hear, "We need more time." Well, look, it has taken us years to get to this point. I want them to ask the widows of General Kepner and all the veterans, the thousands of widows and sons and daughters who lost their parents, if they need more time. To them, it is too late, and we need to act now.

Mr. Speaker, this is reminiscent of the notion that our Vietnam veterans say, that what they want to do is delay till dead. Delay, delay, delay until they are dead. We cannot allow that to happen.

Then the next is, "It costs too much." Well, that is a value statement. That is a value statement. To us, valuing the lives of our veterans and their family members is more important than giving billions of dollars to billionaires in a tax law that shortchanged the middle class. Their Health Care for Burn Pit Veterans Act will shortchange our veterans and their widows who need the care right now because they are dying from burn pits.

That is our value, and that is the value I am pleading to the folks on the other side to join us in, in a bipartisan way with unity to support our veterans.

Mr. Speaker, veterans are watching. They are listening. They care. Some are even listening to this with oxygen in nasal cannula taking their medications. Some could possibly be in their hospital bed taking chemotherapy. Some are in tears because a widow's and their father or mother's experiences are finally being recognized, and finally, we are able to do something. They are watching, and your sympathies will be reflected in your vote.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the blue water Navy and Agent Orange were different. In 2011, the Institute of Medicine concluded that, given the passage of time and lack of sampling data, there was not enough information to conclusively determine whether blue water Navy veterans were exposed to Agent Orange. However, we already knew what conditions were linked to Agent Orange.

On the other hand, VA already presumes that certain veterans were exposed to burn pits, but it is unclear what conditions are linked to that exposure. The use of burn pits was more recent, and much of the data needed to determine whether benefits are warranted for certain conditions is still available.

That is why I support and why I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 6659, which has already passed the Senate, which would advance research into health benefits for toxic exposures and get needed healthcare for those veterans now.

Mr. Speaker, I was pleased during last night's State of the Union that President Biden highlighted the need to address the needs of toxic-exposed veterans.

As I stated earlier in debate just yesterday, VA announced it is initiating the rulemaking process to extend benefits to certain Gulf war and post-9/11 veterans who developed nine respiratory cancers.

Clearly, Secretary McDonough has the authority to provide benefits for veterans on a presumptive basis. I applaud the Secretary for exercising his authority to provide toxic-exposed veterans with the earned benefits based on science, and I urge him to continue to do so.

We should pass the Health Care for Burn Pit Veterans Act now so we can send it straight to the President's desk immediately while we continue to work with our Senate colleagues and VA on the right solution for additional benefits. However, toxic-exposed veterans will not receive healthcare or benefits simply by virtue of passing the PACT Act in the House today.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, to give the final words on the underlying bill, the PACT Act, on my mind is a constituent, a Vietnam veteran named Zack Earp, a distant relative of the great Wyatt Earp. Zack sacrificed mightily on behalf of our country, and his body trembles today from Parkinsonism, one of the presumptives that got added during the blue water Navy debate. And I was happy to lead the final charge on getting the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act across the finish line.

But do you know what? Passage of that bill and its signage into law fi-

nally brought justice to our Vietnam veterans who served on naval surface ships on the territorial waters of Vietnam. It was 40 years late, justice 40 years late.

Mr. Speaker, I vowed that this would not happen again. To pass half measures, one-tenth measures, or one-half of 1 percent measures, which is what the minority proposes to do today, as a substitute for a comprehensive bill is simply repeating the history of what we did to our Vietnam veterans. Burn pits are this generation of veterans' Agent Orange.

Mr. Speaker, I say to my friends that we cannot repeat that history. We owe our Vietnam veterans that implicit promise that we would not repeat the history that was done to them.

As for the cost, I hear the other side competing with the President. Let us send more billions of dollars to Ukraine. And I, myself, would support a robust response to Ukraine in terms of money, but where is that same sense of one-upmanship when it comes to taking care of the veterans here in America?

People are falling over each other in this Chamber to get more money to Ukraine. That is the right thing to do, but it is also the right thing to do to take care of our veterans and to finish the unfinished business.

Finally, the science, I am glad to see science is being taken so seriously by the minority after we have seen skepticism about vaccines, skepticism about climate change. Suddenly, we are looking for scientific absolutism about our veterans.

Mr. Speaker, I say to my friends, the science is there. Let's get this done. Let's pass the PACT Act today with a big bipartisan vote.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Each further amendment printed in part B of House Report 117-253 not earlier considered as part of amendments en bloc pursuant to section 3 of House Resolution 950, shall be considered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, may be withdrawn by the proponent at any time before the question is put thereon, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

It shall be in order at any time after debate for the chair of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs or his designee to offer amendments en bloc consisting of further amendments printed in part B of House Report 117-253, not earlier disposed of. Amendments en bloc shall be considered as read, shall be debatable

for 20 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs or their respective designees, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

AMENDMENTS EN BLOC OFFERED BY MR. TAKANO OF CALIFORNIA

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to section 3 of House Resolution 950, I rise to offer 23 amendments en bloc to H.R. 3967.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will designate the amendments en bloc.

Amendments en bloc consisting of amendment Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 24, 25, 26, 27, and 28, printed in part B of House Report 117-253, offered by Mr. TAKANO of California:

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MS. BUSH OF MISSOURI

Page 55, line 20, strike "age" and insert "race and ethnicity".

Page 55, after line 20, insert the following new paragraph (and redesignate the subsequent paragraphs accordingly):

(2) The age of the veteran.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MS. BUSH OF MISSOURI

Page 55, after line 6, insert the following new subsection (and redesignate the subsequent subsection accordingly):

(b) ELEMENTS.—The study under subsection (a) shall assess, with respect to each veteran included in the study, the following:

(1) The race and ethnicity of the veteran.

(2) The age of the veteran.

(3) The period of service and length of service of the veteran in the Armed Forces.

(4) Any military occupational speciality of the veteran.

(5) The gender of the veteran.

(6) The disability status of the veteran.

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MS. BUSH OF MISSOURI

Page 58, line 5, strike "located in the United States".

AMENDMENT NO. 4 OFFERED BY MS. BUSH OF MISSOURI

At the end of title V, add the following:

**SEC. 507. STUDY ON HEALTH EFFECTS OF WASTE RELATED TO MANHATTAN PROJECT ON CERTAIN VETERANS.**

(a) STUDY.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall conduct a study on the health trends of veterans who, while serving in the active military, naval, air, or space service—

(1) participated in activities relating to the Manhattan Project (including activities relating to covered waste) in connection with such service; or

(2) resided at or near, as determined by the Secretary, the locations described in subsection (b).

(b) COVERED LOCATIONS.—The locations described in this subsection are the following locations in the county of St. Louis, Missouri:

(1) Coldwater Creek.

(2) The St. Louis Airport Site.

(3) The West Lake Landfill.

(4) Any other location in the county of St. Louis, Missouri that is proximate to covered waste, as determined by the Secretary.

(c) ELEMENTS.—The study under subsection (a) shall assess, with respect to each veteran included in the study, the following:

(1) The age, gender, and race of the veteran.

(2) The period and location of exposure to covered waste.

(3) Any type of cancer, or other illness associated with toxic exposure, that the veteran has.

(4) A comparison of the overall health condition of the veteran, including any illness of the veteran identified pursuant to paragraph (3), with the overall health condition of past and present civilian populations residing at the same location of exposure.

(d) REPORT.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate a report on the study under subsection (a).

(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) The term "covered waste" means any waste arising from activities carried out in connection with the Manhattan Project.

(2) The term "illness" has the meaning given that term in section 1171 of title 38, United States Code, as added by section 202.

(3) The term "toxic exposure" has the meaning given that term in section 101 of such title, as added by section 102(b).

AMENDMENT NO. 7 OFFERED BY MR. CARTWRIGHT OF PENNSYLVANIA

Page 61, after line 20, insert the following:

(c) VETERANS ORGANIZATIONS.—To the extent practicable, the Secretary shall share with national veterans service organizations and other veterans groups, including such organizations and groups that improve access by veterans to health care and benefits, the list of resources under subsection (a) and the outreach program under subsection (b).

AMENDMENT NO. 8 OFFERED BY MR. GIBBS OF OHIO

Page 15, line 2, insert "and Other Matters" after "Service".

Page 17, after line 6, insert the following new section:

**SEC. 112. AUTHORIZATION PERIOD FOR EMERGENCY TREATMENT IN NON-DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL FACILITIES.**

Section 1703(a)(3) of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking "A covered veteran" and inserting "(A) Except as provided by subparagraph (B), a covered veteran"; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

"(B) In the case of an emergency which existed at the time of admission of a covered veteran to a health care provider, the Secretary shall deem the care or services received by the veteran during such admission to be authorized under subparagraph (A) if the covered veteran (or an individual acting on behalf of the covered veteran) makes an application for such authorization during the period following such admission that the Secretary determines appropriate for purposes of this paragraph, except such period may not be less than 96 hours."

AMENDMENT NO. 9 OFFERED BY MR. GOLDEN OF MAINE

Page 6, line 5, insert "(including mental health services and counseling)" after "hospital care".

Page 6, line 11, insert "(including mental health services and counseling)" after "hospital care".

Page 6, line 17, insert "(including mental health services and counseling)" after "hospital care".

Page 50, line 14, insert "(including mental health services and counseling)" after "hospital care".

AMENDMENT NO. 10 OFFERED BY MR. GOTTHEIMER OF NEW JERSEY

At the end of title V, insert the following:

**SEC. 507. STUDY ON TOXIC EXPOSURE AND MENTAL HEALTH OUTCOMES.**

(a) STUDY REQUIRED.—The Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs shall enter

into an agreement with the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine for the conduct of a study of veterans to assess possible relationships between toxic exposures experienced during service in the Armed Forces and mental health outcomes, including chronic multisymptom illness, traumatic brain injury, post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, psychosis, suicide attempts, and suicide deaths.

(b) ELEMENTS.—For each veteran included in the study under subsection (a), the following information shall be collected and assessed:

(1) Age.

(2) Gender.

(3) Race and ethnicity.

(4) Period and length of service in the Armed Forces.

(5) History of toxic exposure during service in the Armed Forces.

(6) Any diagnosis of chronic multisymptom illness.

(7) Any diagnosis of a mental health or cognitive disorder.

(8) Any history of suicide attempt or suicidality.

(9) If the veteran died by suicide.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than two years after the date after the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives a report containing the findings of the study conducted under subsection (a).

AMENDMENT NO. 11 OFFERED BY MR. GOTTHEIMER OF NEW JERSEY

Page 61, line 20, insert after the period the following: "Information distributed under the outreach program shall be treated as a fact sheet of the Department of Veterans Affairs for purposes of making the information available in multiple languages pursuant to section 2 of the Veterans and Family Information Act (Public Law 117-62; 38 U.S.C. 6303 note)."

AMENDMENT NO. 12 OFFERED BY MRS. HARTZLER OF MISSOURI

Add at the end of title VII the following new sections:

**SEC. 7. NON-APPLICABILITY OF NON-DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS COVENANTS NOT TO COMPETE TO APPOINTMENT OF VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION PERSONNEL.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter I of chapter 74 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

**"§ 7414. Effect of non-Department covenants not to compete**

"(a) NON-APPLICABILITY.—Except as provided in subsection (b), in the case of an individual who is an applicant for appointment to a position in the Veterans Health Administration described in section 7401 of this title, any covenant not to compete into which the individual has entered with a non-Department facility or party shall have no force or effect with respect to the appointment of the individual to such a position.

"(b) SERVICE OBLIGATION.—(1) Any individual who is appointed to such a position in the Veterans Health Administration shall, as a condition of such appointment, agree to provide clinical services at a Department medical facility for the duration of the period described in paragraph (2).

"(2) The period described in this paragraph is the period that begins on the date on which an individual is appointed to such a position and ends on the latter of the following dates:

"(A) The date that is one year after such date of appointment.

“(B) The date of the termination of any covenant not to compete entered into between the individual and a non-Department facility or party.

“(3) The Secretary may waive the requirement under paragraph (1) with respect to an individual at the discretion of the Secretary.

“(c) **TERMINATION OF DEPARTMENT EMPLOYMENT.**—In the case of an individual who is appointed to such a position in the Veterans Health Administration who has entered into a covenant not to compete that is rendered non-applicable pursuant to subsection (a), if the individual's employment at the Veterans Health Administration is terminated for any reason before the specified termination date of such covenant, subsection (a) shall not apply with respect to such covenant after the date of the termination of the individual's employment at the Veterans Health Administration.

“(d) **COVENANT NOT TO COMPETE.**—In this section, the term ‘covenant not to compete’ means an agreement—

“(1) between an employee and employer or a contractor and principal that restricts such employee or contractor from performing—

“(A) any work for another employer for a specified period of time;

“(B) any work in a specified geographical area; or

“(C) work for another employer performing work that is similar to the work such employee or contractor performed for the employer or principal, included as a party to the agreement; and

“(2) that is entered into after the date of enactment of this Act.”.

(b) **CLERICAL AMENDMENT.**—The table of sections at the beginning of this chapter is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 7413 the following new item:

“7414. Effect of non-Department covenants not to compete.”.

**SEC. 7. RECRUITMENT OF PHYSICIANS ON A CONTINGENT BASIS PRIOR TO COMPLETION OF TRAINING REQUIREMENTS.**

Section 7402 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)(1)—

(A) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A) by inserting “or to be offered an appointment to such position on a contingent basis under subsection (h)” after “position”; and

(B) by striking subparagraph (B) and inserting the following:

“(B)(i) have completed a residency leading to board eligibility in a specialty, satisfactory to the Secretary; or

“(ii) with respect to an offer for an appointment on a contingent basis under subsection (h), complete such a residency by not later than two years after the date of such offer; and”;

(2) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(h)(1) The Secretary may appoint an individual under subsection (b)(1) on a contingent basis in accordance with this subsection if the Secretary reasonably anticipated that the individual will have completed the requirements for appointment under such subsection (b)(1) by not later than two years after the date on which the individual is so appointed.

“(2) An individual who is appointed to a position on a contingent basis under paragraph (1) shall be appointed to such position on a permanent basis if, by not later than two years after the date of the contingent appointment, the individual completes all the requirements for appointment under subsection (b)(1).

“(3) An individual who is appointed on a contingent basis under paragraph (1) who fails to complete the requirements for ap-

pointment under subsection (b)(1) by not later than two years after the date on which the individual is so appointed may not be appointed to such position on a permanent basis.”.

AMENDMENT NO. 13 OFFERED BY MS. JACKSON  
LEE OF TEXAS

Page 74, after line 19, insert the following new subsection:

(c) **REPORT ON NATIONAL GUARD USE OF ILLER.**—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the feasibility of modifying the Individual Longitudinal Exposure Record to ensure that a member of the National Guard who is deployed in the United States in connection with a natural disaster, without regard to duty status (including any duty under title 10 or title 32, United States Code, or State active duty), may record information regarding a suspected exposure by the member to toxic substances during such deployment.

AMENDMENT NO. 14 OFFERED BY MR. LEVIN OF  
MICHIGAN

Page 19, line 11, insert “, including mental and physical health” after “individual”.

AMENDMENT NO. 15 OFFERED BY MR. LEVIN OF  
CALIFORNIA

Add at the end of title VII the following new section:

**SEC. 7. AUTHORITY FOR SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO AWARD GRANTS TO STATES TO IMPROVE OUTREACH TO VETERANS.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Chapter 63 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating sections 6307 and 6308 and sections 6308 and 6309, respectively; and

(2) by inserting after section 6306 the following new section 6307:

**“§ 6307. Grants to States to improve outreach to veterans**

“(a) **PURPOSE.**—It is the purpose of this section to provide for assistance by the Secretary to States to carry out programs that—

“(1) improve outreach and assistance to veterans and the spouses, children, and parents of veterans, to ensure that such individuals are fully informed about any veterans and veterans-related benefits and programs (including State veterans programs) for which they may be eligible; and

“(2) facilitate opportunities for such individuals to receive competent, qualified services in the preparation, presentation, and prosecution of veterans benefits claims.

“(b) **AUTHORITY.**—The Secretary may award grants to States—

“(1) to carry out, coordinate, improve, or otherwise enhance outreach activities;

“(2) to increase the number of county or tribal veterans service officers serving in the State by hiring new, additional such officers; or

“(3) to expand, carry out, coordinate, improve, or otherwise enhance existing programs, activities, and services of the State's existing organization that has been recognized by the Department of Veterans Affairs pursuant to section 5902, in the preparation, presentation, and prosecution of claims for veterans benefits through representatives who hold positions as county or Tribal veterans service officers.

“(c) **APPLICATION.**—(1) To be eligible for a grant under this section, a State shall submit to the Secretary an application therefor at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may require.

“(2) Each application submitted under paragraph (1) shall include the following:

“(A) A detailed plan for the use of the grant.

“(B) A description of the programs through which the State will meet the outcome measures developed by the Secretary under subsection (i).

“(C) A description of how the State will distribute grant amounts equitably among counties (or Tribal lands, as the case may be) with varying levels of urbanization.

“(D) A plan for how the grant will be used to meet the unique needs of American Indian or Alaska Native veterans, elderly veterans, women veterans, and veterans from other underserved communities.

“(d) **DISTRIBUTION.**—The Secretary shall seek to ensure that grants awarded under this section are equitably distributed among States with varying levels of urbanization.

“(e) **PRIORITY.**—The Secretary shall prioritize awarding grants under this section that will serve the following areas:

“(1) Areas with a critical shortage of county or tribal veterans service officers.

“(2) Areas with high rates of—

“(A) suicide among veterans; or

“(B) referrals to the Veterans Crisis Line.

“(f) **USE OF COUNTY OR TRIBAL VETERANS SERVICE OFFICERS.**—A State that receives a grant under this section to carry out an activity described in subsection (b)(1) shall carry out the activity through—

“(1) a county or Tribal veterans service officer of the State; or

“(2) if the State does not have a county or tribal veterans service officer, or if the county or Tribal veterans service officers of the State cover only a portion of that State, an appropriate entity of a State, local, or Tribal government, or another publicly funded entity, as determined by the Secretary.

“(g) **REQUIRED ACTIVITIES.**—Any grant awarded under this section shall be used—

“(1) to expand existing programs, activities, and services;

“(2) to hire and maintain new, additional county or Tribal veterans service officers; or

“(3) for travel and transportation to facilitate carrying out paragraph (1) or (2).

“(h) **OTHER PERMISSIBLE ACTIVITIES.**—A grant under this section may be used to provide education and training, including on-the-job training, for State, county, local, and tribal government employees who provide (or when trained will provide) veterans outreach services in order for those employees to obtain and maintain accreditation in accordance with procedures approved by the Secretary.

“(i) **OUTCOME MEASURES.**—(1) The Secretary shall develop and provide to each State that receives a grant under this section written guidance on the following:

“(A) Outcome measures.

“(B) Policies of the Department.

“(2) In developing outcome measures under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall consider the following goals:

“(A) Increasing the use of veterans and veterans-related benefits, particularly among vulnerable populations.

“(B) Increasing the number of county and tribal veterans service officers recognized by the Secretary for the representation of veterans under chapter 59 of this title.

“(j) **TRACKING REQUIREMENTS.**—(1) With respect to each grant awarded under this section, the Secretary shall track the use of veterans benefits among the population served by the grant, including the average period of time between the date on which a veteran or other eligible claimant applies for such a benefit and the date on which the veteran or other eligible claimant receives the benefit, disaggregated by type of benefit.

“(2) Not less frequently than annually during the life of the grant program established under this section, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on—

“(A) the information tracked under paragraph (1);



“(B) how the grants awarded under this section serve the unique needs of American Indian or Alaska Native veterans, elderly veterans, women veterans, and veterans from other underserved communities; and

“(C) other information provided by States pursuant to the grant reporting requirements.

“(k) PERFORMANCE REVIEW.—(1) The Secretary shall—

“(A) review the performance of each State that receives a grant under this section; and

“(B) make information regarding such performance publicly available.

“(l) REMEDIATION PLAN.—(1) In the case of a State that receives a grant under this section and does not meet the outcome measures developed by the Secretary under subsection (i), the Secretary shall require the State to submit a remediation plan under which the State shall describe how and when it plans to meet such outcome measures.

“(2) The Secretary may not award a subsequent grant under this section to a State described in paragraph (1) unless the Secretary approves the remediation plan submitted by the State.

“(m) MAXIMUM AMOUNT.—The amount of a grant awarded under this section may not exceed 10 percent of amounts made available for grants under this section for the fiscal year in which the grant is awarded.

“(n) SUPPLEMENT, NOT SUPPLANT.—Any grant awarded under this section shall be used to supplement and not supplant State and local funding that is otherwise available.

“(o) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary for each of fiscal years 2023 through 2027, \$50,000,000 to carry out this section.

“(p) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) The term ‘county or tribal veterans service officer’ includes a local equivalent veterans service officer.

“(2) The term ‘State’ includes each Indian Tribe, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and any territory or possession of the United States.

“(3) The term ‘Veterans Crisis Line’ means the toll-free hotline for veterans established under section 1720F(h) of this title.”

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 63 of such title is amended by striking the items relating to sections 6307 and 6308 and inserting the following new items:

“6307. Grants to States to improve outreach to veterans.

“6308. Outreach for eligible dependents.

“6309. Biennial report to Congress.”

(c) AUTHORIZATION OF ADDITIONAL FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT EMPLOYEE.—During fiscal years 2023 through 2027, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs may hire an additional full-time equivalent employee in the Office of the General Counsel of the Department of Veterans Affairs, as compared to the number of full-time equivalent employees that would otherwise be authorized for such office, to carry out duties under the accreditation, discipline, and fees program.

AMENDMENT NO. 16 OFFERED BY MS. NEWMAN OF ILLINOIS

Add at the end of title VII the following new section:

**SEC. 7. STUDY AND REPORT ON HERBICIDE AGENT EXPOSURE IN PANAMA CANAL ZONE.**

(a) STUDY.—The Secretary of Defense shall conduct a study on the exposure of members of the Armed Forces to herbicide agents, including Agent Orange and Agent Purple, in the Panama Canal Zone during the period beginning on January 1, 1958, and ending on December 31, 1999.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the study conducted under subsection (a).  
AMENDMENT NO. 17 OFFERED BY MR. PAPPAS OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

Page 65, after line 22, insert the following:  
**SEC. 605. GUIDELINES FOR ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY ON POTENTIAL RISKS AND PREVENTION OF TOXIC EXPOSURES.**

Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall jointly coordinate and establish guidelines to be used during training of members of the Armed Forces serving on active duty to provide the members awareness of the potential risks of toxic exposures and ways to prevent being exposed during combat.

AMENDMENT NO. 18 OFFERED BY MS. PLASKETT OF VIRGIN ISLANDS

At the end of title V, add the following:

**SEC. 506. STUDY ON VETERANS IN TERRITORIES OF THE UNITED STATES.**

(a) GAO STUDY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study on the state of access and barriers to benefits and services furnished under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to veterans in Territories of the United States, including deficits in the availability and accessibility of such benefits and services compared to veterans elsewhere in the United States.

(2) ELEMENTS.—The study under paragraph (1) shall include—

(A) the number of veterans in each Territory of the United States;

(B) the number of veterans in each Territory who are enrolled in the system of annual patient enrollment of the Department of Veterans Affairs under section 1705(a) of title 38, United States Code;

(C) the number of veterans in each Territory who are eligible for services under section 1710 of such title but who are not enrolled as described in subparagraph (B);

(D) a detailed description of obstacles facing veterans in each Territory in accessing health care services, including those involving the availability of such services to veterans in the Territory in which the veterans reside, and the distance required of veterans to journey to receive services at a regional medical center of the Veterans Health Administration, a community-based outpatient clinic, or other full-service medical facility of the Department, or death center, respectively;

(E) a detailed description of obstacles facing veterans in each Territory in accessing readjustment counseling services, including those involving the availability of such services to veterans in the Territory in which the veterans reside, and the distance required of veterans to journey to receive services at a readjustment counseling services center of the Department;

(F) a detailed description of obstacles facing veterans in each Territory in accessing other veterans benefits, including those involving the availability of benefits and services to veterans in the Territory in which the veterans reside, and the distance required of the veterans to journey to the nearest office of the Veterans Benefits Administration;

(G) an analysis of the staffing and record-keeping levels and quality of the offices of the Department charged with serving veterans in the Territories, including the availability of the full- and part-time staff of each office to the veterans they are charged with serving, and the continuity of care provided by such staff to such veterans;

(H) an analysis of the availability of the Veterans Community Care Program estab-

lished under section 1703 of title 38, United States Code, to veterans in each Territory;

(I) an analysis of the economic and health consequences for veterans in each Territory resulting from obstacles to accessing adequate assistance and health care at facilities of the Department;

(J) an analysis of the access to assistance and health care provided to veterans in the aftermath of major disasters declared in each of the Territories since September 4, 2017; and

(K) recommendations for improving access of veterans in the Territories to benefits and services furnished by the Secretary, and reducing barriers and deficits in the availability and accessibility of such benefits and services compared to veterans elsewhere in the United States.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to Congress a final report setting forth the results of the study conducted under subsection (a), including the recommendations developed under paragraph (2)(K) of such subsection.

(c) TERRITORY DEFINED.—In this section, the term “Territory” includes American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands.

AMENDMENT NO. 19 OFFERED BY MS. PORTER OF CALIFORNIA

Add at the end of title V the following new section:

**SEC. 507. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS PUBLIC WEBSITE FOR TOXIC EXPOSURE RESEARCH.**

(a) WEBSITE.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall establish, and maintain thereafter, a publically accessible internet website of the Department of Veterans Affairs that serves as a clearinghouse for the publication of all toxic exposure research carried out or funded by the executive branch of the Federal Government.

(b) RELATION TO WAR RELATED ILLNESS AND INJURY STUDY CENTER.—The website developed and maintained under subsection (a) shall be housed under the website of the War Related Illness and Injury Study Center of the Department of Veterans Affairs, or successor center.

(c) COORDINATION.—In carrying out subsection (a), the Secretary shall coordinate with—

(1) the heads of each Federal department or agency carrying out or funding toxic exposure research;

(2) the War Related Illness and Injury Study Center of the Department of Veterans Affairs, or successor center; and

(3) any working group of the Department of Veterans Affairs or other similar entity responsible for coordinating toxic exposure research.

(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) The term “toxic exposure” has the meaning given that term in section 101 of title 38, United States Code, as added by section 102(b).

(2) The term “toxic exposure research” means research on the health consequences of toxic exposures experienced during service in the Armed Forces.

AMENDMENT NO. 21 OFFERED BY MR. RUIZ OF CALIFORNIA

At the end of title VII, insert the following:

**SEC. 707. BUDGET INFORMATION FOR ALTERNATIVES TO BURN PITS.**

The Secretary of Defense shall include in the budget submission of the President under section 1105(a) of title 31, United States Code, for each of fiscal years 2023 through



2027, a dedicated budget line item for incinerators and waste-to-energy waste disposal alternatives to burn pits.

AMENDMENT NO. 24 OFFERED BY MS. SCANLON  
OF PENNSYLVANIA

Add at the end of title VII the following new section:

**SEC. 7. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS  
FOR EXPANSION OF CLAIMS AUTO-  
MATION.**

There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs \$150,000,000 for fiscal year 2023 to continue the modernization and expansion of capabilities and capacity of the Veterans Benefits Management System of the Department of Veterans Affairs to support expected increased claims processing for newly eligible veterans pursuant to this Act and the amendments made by this Act.

AMENDMENT NO. 25 OFFERED BY MS. SLOTKIN OF  
MICHIGAN

Strike section 501 and insert the following:

**SEC. 501. INTERAGENCY WORKING GROUP ON  
TOXIC EXPOSURE RESEARCH.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter II of chapter 73 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

**“§ 7330D. Interagency working group on toxic  
exposure research**

“(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—(1) The Secretary shall establish the Toxic Exposure Research Working Group (in this section referred to as the ‘Working Group’).

“(2) The Working Group shall consist of employees, selected by the Secretary, of the following:

“(A) The Department.

“(B) The Department of Defense.

“(C) The Department of Health and Human Services.

“(D) The Environmental Protection Agency.

“(E) Other Federal entities involved in research activities regarding the health consequences of toxic exposures experienced during active military, naval, air, or space service.

“(b) FUNCTIONS.—The Working Group shall perform the following functions:

“(1) Identify collaborative research activities and resources available among entities represented by members of the Working Group to conduct such collaborative research activities.

“(2) Develop a 5-year strategic plan for Federal entities represented in the Working Group to carry out collaborative research activities.

“(c) REPORTING.—The Secretary shall submit, to the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives, the following:

“(1) Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of the Act, a report on the establishment of the Working Group under subsection (a).

“(2) Not later than two years after the date of enactment of the Act, a report containing the collaborative research activities identified, and the Strategic Plan developed, by the Working Group, under subsection (b).

“(3) Annually during the 5-year period covered by the strategic plan under subsection (b), a progress reports on implementation of the Strategic Plan under subsection (b).

“(d) TERMINATION.—The Working Group shall terminate after submitting the final report under subsection (c).

“(e) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this section—

“(1) The term ‘Act’ means the Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act of 2021.

“(2) The term ‘collaborative research activity’ means a research activity—

“(A) conducted by an entity represented by a member of the Working Group;

“(B) funded by the Federal Government; and

“(C) regarding the health consequences of toxic exposures experienced during active military, naval, air, or space service.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of such subchapter is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 7330C the following new item:

“7330D. Interagency working group on toxic exposure research.”.

(c) IMPLEMENTATION.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall establish the Working Group under section 7330D of such title, as added by subsection (a), not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act

AMENDMENT NO. 26 OFFERED BY MS.  
SPANBERGER OF VIRGINIA

Add at the end of title V the following new section:

**SEC. 5. BIENNIAL REPORT ON HEALTH EF-  
FECTS OF JET FUELS USED BY  
ARMED FORCES.**

Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, and biennially thereafter during the subsequent eight-year period, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate, and make publicly available, a report that includes—

(1) a discussion of the effect of various different types of jet fuels used by the Armed Forces on the health of individuals by length of exposure;

(2) an identification of the immediate symptoms of jet fuel exposure that may indicate future health risks;

(3) a chronology of health safeguards implemented by the Armed Forces intended to reduce the exposure of members of the Armed Forces to jet fuel; and

(4) an identification of any areas relating to jet fuel exposure about which new research needs to be conducted.

AMENDMENT NO. 27 OFFERED BY MRS. TORRES  
OF CALIFORNIA

Page 61, after line 15, insert the following:

“(3) LANGUAGES.—The Secretary shall publish the list under paragraph (1) in languages including the following:

“(A) English.

“(B) Spanish.

“(C) Chinese.

“(D) The seven other most commonly spoken languages in the United States.”.

AMENDMENT NO. 28 OFFERED BY MRS. TORRES  
OF CALIFORNIA

Page 55, line 14, strike “veterans to” and insert “veterans, to”.

Page 55, line 16, strike “veterans.” and insert “veterans, and on available early detection diagnostics, to determine the feasibility and advisability of including such diagnostics as part of the health care furnished to veterans by the Secretary.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 950, the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) and the gentlewoman from Iowa (Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan en bloc of amendments, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the en bloc package. Many of these amendments strengthen the underlying bill. However, I wish we could have more time in committee to fully examine the impact these amendments would have on this legislation.

While I will not oppose the en bloc package, some of the included amendments are well outside the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs’ jurisdiction or may require additional work, and I must highlight these concerns.

Three of the amendments clearly impact the operations of the Department of Defense and are well outside the Department of Veterans Affairs’ expertise or mission.

Representative BUSH’s amendment No. 3 would necessitate that the VA review known cases of toxic exposure on military installations both in the United States and abroad. Bush amendment No. 4 requires a study of health outcomes related to waste from the Manhattan Project.

If anyone is going to conduct such reviews, it should be the Department of Defense, not the Department of Veterans Affairs. VA’s time and resources need to be focused on meeting the needs of veterans, not on investigating activities on military bases or as part of military programs.

Yet another amendment, Representative PAPPAS’ amendment No. 17, would require VA to conduct a study outside of VA’s expertise and purview.

□ 1345

This amendment would require Virginia to coordinate with the Department of Defense to provide training to Active Duty servicemembers on toxic exposure. It is inappropriate for the VA to be involved in training Active Duty servicemembers, that is entirely the DOD’s purview.

Finally, Representative SCANLON’s amendment 24 would authorize an additional \$150 million in discretionary funding for VA’s Veterans Benefits Management System, ahead of an expected drastic increase in disability claims should the Honoring our PACT Act be enacted. I agree with the intent. We need to make additional investments in benefits IT, but this is not the right way to do it.

According to the CBO, the bill already includes funding for IT improvements. We have no plan from the VA about how various systems should be modernized and how much it will ultimately cost. The worst thing we could do is throw money at individual systems with no coordination.

Moreover, this amendment improperly earmarks \$150 million for VBMS, which is a dysfunctional and flawed system. VBMS has cost over \$1 billion and has been struggling since its inception 10 years ago. I am not comfortable with spending another \$150 million on it unless the VA gives us a plan explaining how it can be modernized.

Moving forward, we need to work on allocating funding where it can have

the most impact. Again, I support the intent and look forward to ensuring that any IT funding supports veterans in the manner intended.

As I stated earlier, while I do have concerns about these four amendments, I will support the en bloc package and urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, at this time I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Missouri (Ms. BUSH), my good friend who serves on the Judiciary Committee and the House Oversight and Reform Committee.

Ms. BUSH. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. TAKANO for his leadership on this historic legislation.

Mr. Speaker, St. Louis and I rise today in support of H.R. 3967, the Honoring our PACT Act, to expand healthcare, research, and resources for our veterans who are far too often exposed to toxic substances, both around the world and at home in St. Louis. This means so much to me as a nurse, I see it all the time.

I am proud to put forward four critical amendments to this legislation to help expand racial equity and study the military's environmental impact through rigorous Department of Veterans Affairs initiatives. My first two amendments ensure that VA research studies include a broader array of demographic information, including race, ethnicity, and disability status in gathering information on the impacts of toxic exposure.

Our third vital amendment ensures the VA will extend reviews of known cases of toxic exposure to military sites abroad. The Department of Defense needs to provide concrete data about the waste and pollution we are leaving in the nearly 750 military bases in over 80 countries around the world.

Finally, our last amendment adds a new study to this bill to measure the harmful health consequences of Manhattan Project waste on our veterans and their families in St. Louis.

If you are from North St. Louis there is a good chance that at some point in your life you have been exposed to toxic military waste like I have. From West Lake Landfill to Coldwater Creek, toxic military nuclear waste has been dumped in our communities, leading to rare cancers and birth defects.

Our veterans worked with this waste and are still living with it. The study is just one step we are taking to care for their health and safety. I look forward to voting in support of the Honoring our PACT Act and advancing these critical amendments that will help us to save lives.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. GIBBS).

Mr. GIBBS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of amendment No. 8 in the en bloc. This amendment helps veterans and their families navigate a bureaucratic maze at VA. It is very frustrating a lot of times when they re-

ceive medical treatment at a non-VA facility.

When a veteran is admitted to a hospital or emergency department they currently only have 3 days to notify the VA. If they fail to notify the VA in that 3-day window, any claim associated with that visit will be automatically denied.

There are circumstances when getting immediate medical care outside of the VA system is the veteran's only option, especially during a medical emergency. They and their family should not have to worry about paperwork and the bureaucracy if the veteran is facing a life-threatening condition or is unable to make his or her own healthcare decisions.

My amendment simply just lengthens that window and adds another day onto that window to report the claim. When you think about this, if you are going in on an emergency basis and after you get stabilized—it might take a couple days in the hospital to get stabilized—that extra day doesn't seem like much, but it is really important because they get stabilized and they get time to sort through where they are at. That is so important. We have helped hundreds and maybe thousands of veterans back in Ohio, and this comes up all the time, and they have to fight to get their claim.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is really important, just a little bit of extra time. It is a no-brainer issue. I appreciate the chair putting it in the en bloc because it is really important because veterans, especially when they are in a non-veteran facility and have emergency care, they shouldn't have to worry about that deadline, and it just gives them a little extra time.

Mr. Speaker, I support amendment No. 8.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Virginia (Ms. SPANBERGER), my good friend who serves as a subcommittee chair on the Agriculture Committee and as a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Ms. SPANBERGER. Mr. Speaker, my commitment to supporting veterans suffering from toxic exposures has been ironclad since I first met the late Michael Lecik, a father, a husband, a firefighter, and a veteran who died of cancer related to his exposures.

It continued when I met Gillie Jenkins, an atomic war veteran from Chesterfield, Virginia, who in his 90s is still fighting for the recognition of his brothers in arms and the sacrifices that they made.

Today, when I rise in support of my amendment to H.R. 3967, I am doing so inspired by William G. Collins, a veteran from Louisa County, Virginia. My amendment would require the VA to investigate the long-term health impacts of jet fuel exposures on our country's servicemembers.

Mr. Collins, a veteran from Louisa County, Virginia, is living with Parkinson's. As a former Air Force crew

fire chief, his years of constant exposure to jet fuel put him at risk, but now the VA does not recognize Mr. Collins' condition as having a service connection. Mr. Collins served honorably, and he should know that his country has his back.

Mr. Speaker, this amendment would bring us one step closer to ensure that veterans like William have the healthcare benefits they deserve and the acknowledgment of their sacrifice.

Mr. Collins says, "This disease has impacted my health, my economic security, and potentially my wife and I's dream of spending our last years on our beloved farm where we raised our family."

Mr. Speaker, today I urge my colleagues to support this long overdue amendment as we support all of our Nation's veterans.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. CARTWRIGHT), the distinguished subcommittee chair of the Appropriations Committee.

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, here is the deal. When we send our servicemembers into harm's way the deal is that we are going to take care of them when they get back home. It is more than a deal; it is a pact. It is something sacred. But for far too long Congress and the Department of Veterans Affairs have been slow in acting on that pact citing the high cost or the lack of science. The result is a disability claims benefit process that is cumbersome and places the burden on the veteran himself or herself to prove toxic exposure.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of my amendment which streamlines this process. It helps ease the burden of the disability benefit claims process on servicemembers and their families by, number one, requiring the Secretary of the VA to share a list of resources for toxic-exposed veterans, caregivers of toxic-exposed veterans, and survivors of toxic-exposed vets, national veterans service organizations, and other veterans' groups.

Number two, it requires the VA Secretary to share an outreach program with those VSOs. I believe we have to take every step possible to ensure that we offer the best care to those who have served our Nation. My amendment is a step forward in reaching the goal that servicemembers and their families should be made aware of every resource, and that includes the resources included in the Honoring our PACT Act.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I ask all my colleagues to join me in supporting these 23 amendments en bloc, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 950, the previous question is ordered on the amendments en bloc offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO).

The question is on the amendments en bloc.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. BIGGS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3(s) of House Resolution 8, the yeas and nays are ordered.

Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question are postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 5 OFFERED BY MRS. MILLER-MEEKS.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 5 printed in part B of House Report 117-253.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise as the designee of the gentleman from Illinois, and I have an amendment at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Strike page 1, line 1, and all that follows through page 80, line 7, and insert the following:

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Health Care for Burn Pit Veterans Act”.

#### SEC. 2. EXPANSION OF ELIGIBILITY FOR HEALTH CARE FROM DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FOR CERTAIN VETERANS EXPOSED TO TOXIC SUBSTANCES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1710(e)(3) of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A)—

(A) by striking “January 27, 2003” and inserting “September 11, 2001”; and

(B) by striking “five-year period” and inserting “ten-year period”;

(2) by amending subparagraph (B) to read as follows:

“(B) With respect to a veteran described in paragraph (1)(D) who was discharged or released from the active military, naval, air, or space service after September 11, 2001, and before October 1, 2013, but did not enroll to receive such hospital care, medical services, or nursing home care under such paragraph pursuant to subparagraph (A) before October 1, 2022, the one-year period beginning on October 1, 2022.”; and

(3) by striking subparagraph (C).

(b) CLARIFICATION OF COVERAGE.—Section 1710(e)(1)(D) of such title is amended by inserting after “Persian Gulf War” the following: “(including any veteran who, in connection with service during such period, received the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, Service Specific Expeditionary Medal, Combat Era Specific Expeditionary Medal, Campaign Specific Medal, or any other combat theater award established by a Federal statute or an Executive Order)”.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than October 1, 2024, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committees on Veterans Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate a report on—

(1) the number of veterans who enrolled in the system of annual patient enrollment of the Department of Veterans Affairs estab-

lished and operated under section 1705(a) of title 38, United States Code, to receive care pursuant to eligibility under subparagraph (B) of section 1710(e)(3) of such title, as amended by subsection (a)(2); and

(2) of the veterans described in paragraph (1), the number of such veterans who reported a health concern related to exposure to a toxic substance or radiation.

(d) OUTREACH PLAN.—Not later than December 1, 2022, the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate a plan to conduct outreach to veterans described in subparagraph (B) of section 1710(e)(3) of title 38, United States Code, as amended by subsection (a)(2), to notify such veterans of their eligibility for hospital care, medical services, or nursing home care under such subparagraph.

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section and the amendments made by this section shall take effect on October 1, 2022.

#### SEC. 3. INCORPORATION OF TOXIC EXPOSURE SCREENING FOR VETERANS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Beginning not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall incorporate a screening to help determine potential exposures to toxic substances during active military, naval, air, or space service as part of a health care screening furnished by the Secretary to veterans enrolled in the system of annual patient enrollment of the Department of Veterans Affairs established and operated under section 1705 of title 38, United States Code, to improve understanding by the Department of exposures of veterans to toxic substances while serving in the Armed Forces.

(b) TIMING.—The Secretary shall ensure that a veteran described in subsection (a) completes the screening required under such subsection not less frequently than once every five years.

(c) DETERMINATION OF QUESTIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The questions included in the screening required under subsection (a) shall be determined by the Secretary with input from medical professionals.

(2) SPECIFIC QUESTIONS.—At a minimum, the screening required under subsection (a) shall, with respect to a veteran, include—

(A) a question about the potential exposure of the veteran to an open burn pit; and

(B) a question regarding exposures that are commonly associated with service in the Armed Forces.

(3) OPEN BURN PIT DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term “open burn pit” means an area of land that—

(A) is designated by the Secretary of Defense to be used for disposing solid waste by burning in the outdoor air; and

(B) does not contain a commercially manufactured incinerator or other equipment specifically designed and manufactured for the burning of solid waste.

(d) PRINT MATERIAL.—In developing the screening established under subsection (a), the Secretary shall ensure that print materials complementary to such screening that outline related resources for veterans are available at each medical center of the Department to veterans who may not have access to the internet.

(e) SCREENING UPDATES.—The Secretary shall consider updates to the content of the screening required under subsection (a) not less frequently than biennially to ensure the screening contains the most current information.

(f) ACTIVE MILITARY, NAVAL, AIR, OR SPACE SERVICE DEFINED.—In this section, the term “active military, naval, air, or space service” has the meaning given that term in section 101(24) of title 38, United States Code.

#### SEC. 4. TRAINING FOR PERSONNEL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS WITH RESPECT TO VETERANS EXPOSED TO TOXIC SUBSTANCES.

(a) HEALTH CARE PERSONNEL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall provide to health care personnel of the Department of Veterans Affairs education and training to identify, treat, and assess the impact on veterans of illnesses related to exposure to toxic substances and inform such personnel of how to ask for additional information from veterans regarding different exposures.

(b) BENEFITS PERSONNEL.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall incorporate a training program for processors of claims under the laws administered by the Secretary who review claims for disability benefits relating to service-connected disabilities based on exposure to toxic substances.

(2) ANNUAL TRAINING.—Training provided to processors under paragraph (1) shall be provided not less frequently than annually.

#### SEC. 5. ANALYSIS AND REPORT ON TREATMENT OF VETERANS FOR MEDICAL CONDITIONS RELATED TO TOXIC EXPOSURE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall analyze, on a continuous basis, all clinical data that—

(1) is obtained by the Department of Veterans Affairs in connection with hospital care, medical services, and nursing home care furnished under section 1710(a)(2)(F) of title 38, United States Code; and

(2) is likely to be scientifically useful in determining the association, if any, between the medical condition of a veteran and the exposure of the veteran to a toxic substance.

(b) ANNUAL REPORT.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate a report containing—

(1) the aggregate data compiled under subsection (a);

(2) an analysis of such data;

(3) a description of the types and incidences of medical conditions identified by the Department under such subsection;

(4) the explanation of the Secretary for the incidence of such medical conditions and other explanations for the incidence of such conditions as the Secretary considers reasonable; and

(5) the views of the Secretary on the scientific validity of drawing conclusions from the incidence of such medical conditions, as evidenced by the data compiled under subsection (a), regarding any association between such conditions and exposure to a toxic substance.

#### SEC. 6. ANALYSIS RELATING TO MORTALITY OF VETERANS WHO SERVED IN SOUTH-WEST ASIA.

(a) ANALYSIS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 270 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, in coordination with the Secretary of Defense, shall conduct an updated analysis of total and respiratory disease mortality in covered veterans.

(2) ELEMENTS.—The analysis required by paragraph (1) shall include, to the extent practicable, the following with respect to each covered veteran:

(A) Metrics of airborne exposures.

(B) The location and timing of deployments of the veteran.

(C) The military occupational specialty of the veteran.

(D) The Armed Force in which the veteran served.

(E) Pre-existing health status of the veteran, including with respect to asthma.

(F) Relevant personal information of the veteran, including cigarette and e-cigarette smoking history, diet, sex, gender, age, race, and ethnicity.

(b) COVERED VETERAN DEFINED.—In this section, the term “covered veteran” means any veteran who—

(1) on or after August 2, 1990, served on active duty in—

- (A) Bahrain;
- (B) Iraq;
- (C) Kuwait;
- (D) Oman;
- (E) Qatar;
- (F) Saudi Arabia;
- (G) Somalia; or
- (H) the United Arab Emirates; or

(2) on or after September 11, 2001, served on active duty in—

- (A) Afghanistan;
- (B) Djibouti;
- (C) Egypt;
- (D) Jordan;
- (E) Lebanon;
- (F) Syria; or
- (G) Yemen.

#### SEC. 7. STUDY ON HEALTH TRENDS OF POST 9/11 VETERANS.

The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall conduct an epidemiological study on the health trends of veterans who served in the Armed Forces after September 11, 2001.

#### SEC. 8. STUDY ON CANCER RATES AMONG VETERANS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall conduct a study on the incidence of cancer in veterans to determine trends in the rates of the incidence of cancer in veterans.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The study required by subsection (a) shall assess, with respect to each veteran included in the study, the following:

- (1) The age of the veteran.
- (2) The period of service and length of service of the veteran in the Armed Forces.
- (3) The military occupational specialty or specialties of the veteran.
- (4) The gender of the veteran.
- (5) The type or types of cancer that the veteran has.

#### SEC. 9. PUBLICATION OF LIST OF RESOURCES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FOR VETERANS EXPOSED TO TOXIC SUBSTANCES AND OUTREACH PROGRAM FOR SUCH VETERANS AND CAREGIVERS AND SURVIVORS OF SUCH VETERANS.

(a) PUBLICATION OF LIST OF RESOURCES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall publish a list of resources of the Department of Veterans Affairs for—

- (A) veterans who were exposed to toxic substances;
- (B) families and caregivers of such veterans; and
- (C) survivors of such veterans who are receiving death benefits under the laws administered by the Secretary.

(2) UPDATE.—The Secretary shall periodically update the list published under paragraph (1).

(b) OUTREACH.—The Secretary shall develop, with input from the community, an informative outreach program for veterans on illnesses that may be related to exposure to toxic substances, including outreach with respect to benefits and support programs.

#### SEC. 10. REPORT ON INDIVIDUAL LONGITUDINAL EXPOSURE RECORD.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the date on which the Individual Longitudinal Exposure Record achieves full operational capability, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report on the data

quality of the Individual Longitudinal Exposure Record and the usefulness of the Individual Longitudinal Exposure Record in supporting veterans in receiving health care and benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The report required by subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) An identification of exposures to toxic substances that may not be fully captured by the current systems for environmental and occupational health monitoring and recommendations for how to improve those systems.

(2) An analysis of the quality of the location data in determining exposures of veterans to toxic substances and recommendations for how to improve the quality of that location data.

(3) Recommendations on how to improve the usefulness of the Individual Longitudinal Exposure Record.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) The term “appropriate congressional committees” means—

(A) the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives; and

(B) the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate.

(2) The term “Individual Longitudinal Exposure Record” includes any pilot program or other program used by the Department of Veterans Affairs or the Department of Defense to track how members of the Armed Forces or veterans have been exposed to various occupational or environmental hazards.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 950, the gentlewoman from Iowa (Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Iowa.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss Ranking Member BOST’s amendment to replace the Honoring our PACT Act with the Health Care for Burn Pit Veterans Act.

The Health Care for Burn Pit Veterans Act is a bipartisan legislation that has already passed in the Senate. It would expand healthcare for toxic-exposed veterans by extending VA’s enhanced combat eligibility period from 5 to 10 years. That would give post-9/11 combat veterans a decade after leaving the military to enroll in VA care without having a service-connected disability rating or a low income.

Those who have been out of the military for more than a decade would be able to enroll during a 1-year open enrollment period. The bill would also improve training for VA staff on how to recognize and treat toxic exposure; research on the impact of toxic exposure; and outreach about the resources available to veterans regarding toxic exposure. CBO has estimated that the bill would cost \$1 billion in discretionary funding over 10 years.

□ 1400

This is in stark contrast to the over \$300 billion discretionary and mandatory costs of the PACT Act.

The Healthcare for Burn Pit Veterans Act would not expand compensation benefits for toxic-exposed veterans.

I appreciate the importance of benefits. That is why Ranking Member BOST and I remain committed to working across the aisle and Capitol to improve benefits for toxic-exposed veterans.

The framework that the PACT Act establishes to do that, however, is unworkable, and I am afraid the PACT Act will stall without a clear path forward in the Senate.

I don’t want to let the perfect be the enemy of the good on an issue as important as this one. I also don’t want to let this Congress go by without helping veterans who are sick and dying from toxic exposure. As a veteran and as a doctor who has cared for sick and dying patients, that would be an unacceptable outcome for me.

Passage of the Healthcare for Burn Pit Veterans Act is a critical first step in saving the lives of veterans suffering from toxic exposure. The House should not let another day go by without sending it to the President. The stakes are too high.

Behind me is a picture of Lauren Price. She passed away from conditions she and her husband Jim believe were related to toxic exposure. Ranking Member BOST invited Jim to testify last year about Lauren’s legacy. During his testimony, Jim stressed the need to provide veterans like her with VA healthcare. As he said, benefits don’t mean much if a veteran isn’t alive to get them because they didn’t get the healthcare they need and earned.

Jim’s message is an important one. Some veterans cannot afford to keep waiting for Congress to agree on a comprehensive way forward. That would be a monumental task, and we have not even started it yet. That is why the House must pass the Healthcare for Burn Pit Veterans Act today. I hope we will.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia). The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to Ranking Member BOST’s substitute offered in his absence by Representative MILLER-MEEKS.

I want to be clear about what this substitute is and what it is not. The ranking member has offered this amendment as the solution to addressing toxic exposure. But it is not that. The substitute amendment is the exact text of a Senator TESTER bill which is meant to be the first part of a three-part effort in the Senate.

What Senator TESTER has proposed, is doing in three phases what we have done in the PACT Act together. Yet my colleague from Illinois and my colleague from Iowa have taken the work of the Senate without intending to do

any more. This is it. They are representing this as the complete solution which amounts to really a bait and switch.

This substitute amendment would strike the entire PACT Act and replace it with an expansion of existing healthcare eligibility for combat veterans from 5 to 10 years. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that this provision will impact roughly 16,000 veterans over the next 10 years. This is laudable, but let's talk about the math.

Over the past 20 years, 3.5 million servicemembers deployed to areas where they may have been exposed to toxic substances. So the ranking member's amendment would leave behind over 3.4 million veterans.

This is not even a half measure, this substitute, this replacement, that they offer. It is not even one-tenth. It is one-half of 1 percent, a one-half of 1 percent solution compared to the comprehensive bill that we need.

The policy of this amendment is something we agree on. We should enhance eligibility for combat veterans which is why we included the language in the bill before you today, Mr. Speaker. However, it only covers less than half a percentage point of the number of veterans who would be covered under PACT.

My colleague is asserting that less than one-half of a percentage point is enough to be done and then walk away?

The math does not add up, and veterans know it. That is why over 42 veterans service organizations are supporting the PACT Act. Again, I reference the letters previously inserted into the RECORD.

During the President's State of the Union Address last night, he highlighted the importance of this topic citing his own family tragedy and the loss of his son, Beau, to brain cancer after his military service. He called on Congress to "pass a law to make sure veterans devastated by toxic exposures in Iraq and Afghanistan finally get the benefits and comprehensive healthcare they deserve."

Let me repeat that: pass a law to make sure veterans devastated by toxic exposures in Iraq and Afghanistan finally get the benefits and comprehensive healthcare they deserve.

The Bost substitute is far from comprehensive. In fact, it is a fraction of what our veterans have earned and deserve.

It is time we honored our pact to our veterans. That is why I implore my colleagues to reject this incremental measure and join me in supporting the only comprehensive toxic-exposure legislation that delivers on our sacred promise, the PACT Act.

Mr. Speaker, how much time do I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has 1¼ minutes remaining.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, with all due deference to my colleague,

Ranking Member BOST has made it abundantly clear that this is a first step—not a last step—but an initial first step in getting veterans the healthcare that they need and deserve.

Mr. Speaker, I urge and implore my colleagues to pass Mr. BOST's amendment No. 5.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE), who is my good friend and who serves on the Budget Committee, the Homeland Security Committee, and as the chair of the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security on the Judiciary Committee.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank my distinguished friend for yielding.

I rise enthusiastically joining the President and joining our chairman in pushing the Honoring our PACT Act and just remind the underlying amendment by Mr. BOST, one-half of 1 percent, do we in this time, do our veterans, do our soldiers deserve half treatment?

I don't think so.

The Jackson Lee amendment adds to this legislation. It would add a report on the feasibility of modifying the individual longitudinal exposure record system used to register toxic exposure of military personnel to include members of the National Guard who are deployed in the United States in connection with a natural disaster without regard to duty status and may record information regarding a suspected exposure by the National Guard to toxic substances while they are in the midst of their rescues.

We know and we thank the House Veterans' Affairs Committee for recognizing and working with my staff that the National Guard is involved in toxic matters on home side. They collaborate with and support civilian authorities and traditional first responders, they are called in as a helpmate. They serve to strengthen and expand local disaster response while the emergency services of a State or locale may have robust plans to deal with unexpected, sometimes disasters strike that overwhelm their resources.

Let me just show you, Mr. Speaker, they are involved in the work. This is an important amendment, and I ask my colleagues to support it.

Mr. Speaker, Chairman MCGOVERN, thank you for this opportunity to discuss briefly three Jackson Lee Amendment #13, to H.R. 3967, the Honoring our PACT Act.

The PACT Act provides much needed attention to the issue of toxic exposure of military service personnel when it occurs during deployment.

Jackson Lee Amendment #13 would add a report on the feasibility of modifying the Individual Longitudinal Exposure Record System used to register toxic exposure of military personnel, to include members of the National Guard who are deployed in the United States in connection with a natural disaster, without

regard to duty status may record information regarding a suspected exposure by the National Guard to toxic substances during such deployment.

I thank the House Committee on Veterans Affairs for working with my staff on this Jackson Lee Amendment to H.R. 3967.

The National Guard collaborates with and supports civilian authorities and traditional first responders in their efforts to respond to emergencies and disasters.

They serve to strengthen and expand the local disaster response capacity.

While the emergency services of a state or locale may have robust plans to deal with the unexpected, sometimes disasters strike that overwhelm their resources and manpower.

During these times the National Guard can play a vital role in saving lives, stemming suffering and protecting property.

This amendment is important because of the conditions that can exist during manmade or natural disasters that may expose National Guard members to toxic substances.

National Guard service personnel provide vital services before, during and following disasters that require that they come into contact with flood waters, wildfires and other disasters that by their nature would breach containment, manufacturing, and storage facilities for toxic substances that would pose a risk to people.

I recall the flood waters of Hurricane Harvey and the hundreds of refineries, small and large chemical processing facilities, and storage facilities that were impacted by flood waters.

Some of these impacts included the risk of explosions due to the loss of containment caused by a loss of electricity or the encroachment of flood waters.

As was the case when two explosions shook the Arkema chemical facility that resulted in a fire because the temperature required to safely store chemicals was lost due to a power outage caused by Hurricane Harvey flooding.

Many chemical facilities are located in low-lying coastal areas and vulnerable to damage from hurricanes, flooding, and erosion, which are increasing with climate change.

Extreme weather can trigger industrial disasters, including explosions, fires, and major chemical releases, as well as chronic chemical leakage into air, water, and soil.

Researchers identified 872 highly hazardous chemical facilities within 50 miles of the hurricane-prone U.S. Gulf Coast.

Coastal areas are also densely populated and would be where National Guard would be deployed to evacuate and assist residents in advance of, during and following the landfall of a Hurricane.

There are approximately 4,374,000 people, 1,717 schools, and 98 medical facilities within 1.5 miles of the facilities according to the Milken Institute School of Public Health, George Washington University, which collected survey data.

The Jackson Lee amendment would provide a report to inform the Committee on Veterans Affairs of the importance of including toxic exposure data on National Guard personnel who are exposed to toxic substances when deployed in response to disasters.

In 2021, following Hurricane Ida's landfall in an analysis by the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS) of the New Orleans area revealed that 138 industrial facilities in and around the city—some of which use electricity

to contain hazardous chemicals—were potentially without power, putting facility workers and nearby civilians at enormous risk.

Flood waters, smoke from wildfires, and earthquakes have impacts on facilities, businesses, and research facilities that are safe until they are compromised by the impact of a natural or manmade disaster.

I urge the Committee to make in order the Jackson Lee Amendment to H.R. 3967.

Thank you.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 950, the previous question is ordered on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Iowa (Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS).

The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Iowa (Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS).

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the yeas appeared to have it.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3(s) of House Resolution 8, the yeas and nays are ordered.

Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question are postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 6 OFFERED BY MS. BROWNLEY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 6 printed in part B of House Report 117-253.

Ms. BROWNLEY. Mr. Speaker, I have an amendment at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 14, after line 19, insert the following:  
**SEC. 105. REVISION OF BREAST CANCER MAMMOGRAPHY POLICY OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO PROVIDE MAMMOGRAPHY SCREENING FOR VETERANS WHO SERVED IN LOCATIONS ASSOCIATED WITH TOXIC EXPOSURE.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 7322 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking “The” and inserting “IN GENERAL.—The”;

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) by striking “The” and inserting “STANDARDS FOR SCREENING.—The”; and

(B) in paragraph (2)(B), by inserting “a record of service in a location and during a period specified in subsection (d),” after “risk factors,”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new subsections:

“(c) ELIGIBILITY FOR SCREENING FOR VETERANS EXPOSED TO TOXIC SUBSTANCES.—The Under Secretary for Health shall ensure that, under the policy developed under subsection (a), any veteran who, during active military, naval, or air service, was deployed in support of a contingency operation in a location and during a period specified in subsection (d), is eligible for a mammography screening by a health care provider of the Department.

“(d) LOCATIONS AND PERIODS SPECIFIED.—(1) The locations and periods specified in this subsection are the following:

“(A) Iraq during following periods:

“(i) The period beginning on August 2, 1990, and ending on February 28, 1991.

“(ii) The period beginning on March 19, 2003, and ending on such date as the Secretary determines burn pits are no longer used in Iraq.

“(B) The Southwest Asia theater of operations, other than Iraq, during the period beginning on August 2, 1990, and ending on such date as the Secretary determines burn pits are no longer used in such location, including the following locations:

“(i) Kuwait.

“(ii) Saudi Arabia.

“(iii) Oman.

“(iv) Qatar.

“(C) Afghanistan during the period beginning on September 11, 2001, and ending on such date as the Secretary determines burn pits are no longer used in Afghanistan.

“(D) Djibouti during the period beginning on September 11, 2001, and ending on such date as the Secretary determines burn pits are no longer used in Djibouti.

“(E) Syria during the period beginning on September 11, 2001, and ending on such date as the Secretary determines burn pits are no longer used in Syria.

“(F) Jordan during the period beginning on September 11, 2001, and ending on such date as the Secretary determines burn pits are no longer used in Jordan.

“(G) Egypt during the period beginning on September 11, 2001, and ending on such date as the Secretary determines burn pits are no longer used in Egypt.

“(H) Lebanon during the period beginning on September 11, 2001, and ending on such date as the Secretary determines burn pits are no longer used in Lebanon.

“(I) Yemen during the period beginning on September 11, 2001, and ending on such date as the Secretary determines burn pits are no longer used in Yemen.

“(J) Such other locations and corresponding periods as set forth by the Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry established under section 201 of the Dignified Burial and Other Veterans' Benefits Improvement Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-260; 38 U.S.C. 527 note).

“(K) Such other locations and corresponding periods as the Secretary, in collaboration with the Secretary of Defense, may determine appropriate in a report submitted under paragraph (2).

“(2) Not later than two years after the date of the enactment of the Supporting Expanded Review for Veterans in Combat Environments Act of 2021, and not less frequently than once every two years thereafter, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, in collaboration with the Secretary of Defense, shall submit to Congress a report specifying other locations and corresponding periods for purposes of paragraph (1)(K).

“(3) A location under this subsection shall not include any body of water around or any airspace above such location.

“(4) In this subsection, the term ‘burn pit’ means an area of land that is used for disposal of solid waste by burning in the outdoor air.”.

(b) REPORT ON BREAST CANCER RATES FOR VETERANS DEPLOYED TO CERTAIN AREAS.—Not later than two years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report that compares the rates of breast cancer among members of the Armed Forces deployed to the locations and during the periods specified in section 7322(d) of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), as compared to members of the Armed Forces who were not deployed to those locations during those periods and to the civilian population.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 950, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. BROWNLEY) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

Ms. BROWNLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to offer a straightforward amendment to H.R. 3967, the Honoring our PACT Act, which would simply ensure toxic-exposed veterans have access to mammography screenings.

I would like to begin by thanking my colleague from Iowa, Congresswoman MILLER-MEEKS, for coauthoring this amendment which is based on her outstanding bill.

As chair of the House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Health, I very much want to see the gentlewoman's good bill advance, which is why I am offering this amendment today.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, the conditions related to toxic exposure manifest themselves in many ways and on many different timelines. The incidence rate of breast cancer in women veterans is 20 to 40 percent higher than the incidence rate of breast cancer among nonveteran women. From 2000 to 2015, the VA saw the number of women diagnosed with breast cancer increase by five times for women ages 45 to 65. This is partly due to better screening, but still more can be done, particularly related to those who have been exposed to toxic substances.

Ensuring that veterans have access to lifesaving screening for breast cancer cannot depend on the time after separation from the military and must simply depend on whether a veteran served in a place where they were exposed to toxins.

This amendment, based on the SERVICE Act, directs the director of the Department of Veterans Affairs to provide mammogram screening for female veterans who served in areas associated with burn pits and other toxic exposure. It also directs the VA to submit a report to both the Senate and House Veterans' Affairs Committees 2 years after enactment that compares the instances of breast cancer among members of the Armed Forces.

Women veterans who served in areas with high toxic exposures should not have to wait until they start showing symptoms or reach a certain age to access preventative mammography screenings.

This is why I am proud to join Congresswoman MILLER-MEEKS in offering this lifesaving amendment.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I claim the time in opposition, although I am not opposed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentlewoman from Iowa is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I was pleased to introduce this amendment alongside my colleague, Congresswoman JULIA BROWNLEY, from California.



This amendment is based on our bill, H.R. 4794, the Making Advances in Mammography and Medical Options for Veterans Act. It would ensure that toxic-exposed veterans can access mammography screens through the VA healthcare system. As a doctor I know how very important preventive care is. Early detection of cancer or other serious conditions can be lifesaving for patients.

Veterans deserve the very highest quality care that we can offer them, and that certainly includes timely access to mammograms, particularly for the growing number of women who are volunteering to serve in our Armed Forces.

I thank Congresswoman BROWNLEY for working with me on this amendment, and I am glad that it was made in order.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support that, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. BROWNLEY. Mr. Speaker, how much time is remaining on each side?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from California has 2½ minutes remaining.

Ms. BROWNLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO), who is the great chair of the Veterans' Affairs Committee and who has worked diligently on this very, very important bill.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, the chair of the Subcommittee on Health.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Brownley-Miller-Meeks amendment. Women who have served in the military are 20 to 40 percent more likely to develop breast cancer than women who have never served. It is believed that it is due to exposure to radiation and other carcinogens while serving. It is therefore critical that VA ensure all veterans who have served in locations associated with toxic exposure have access to prompt, high-quality breast imaging services to detect breast cancer early.

This amendment would ensure just that. Any eligible veteran who was deployed and exposed to burn pits and airborne hazards would be eligible for mammography screens by the VA. These screenings will save lives.

Furthermore, it requires VA to submit a report to Congress on the rates of breast cancer among those veterans deployed to such toxic environments and compare those rates against their veteran peers who were not exposed, as well as the civilian population.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to support this commonsense amendment.

□ 1415

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. BROWNLEY. Mr. Speaker, I urge all Members to support mammography screenings for toxic-exposed veterans and vote "yes" on this amendment.

I would also like to say that we must pass this bill today, a bill that will finally, finally, bring justice to our veterans and provide our commitment and promise that we made to our veterans who served our country, both men and women. So this bill is long, long overdue.

Men and women sign up for the Armed Forces. They know they may have to put their lives on the line. They did not know that they may die of toxic exposures.

This bill is long overdue. We need a "yes" vote on the amendment and a "yes" vote on the underlying bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 950, the previous question is ordered on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. BROWNLEY).

The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. BROWNLEY).

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays. The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3(s) of House Resolution 8, the yeas and nays are ordered.

Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question are postponed.

Pursuant to clause 1(c) of rule XIX, further consideration of H.R. 3697 is postponed.

#### MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Byrd, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 3600. An act to improve the cybersecurity of the Federal Government, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that pursuant to Public Law 117-81, the Chair, on behalf of the Ranking Member of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, appoints the following individual to serve as a member of the Afghanistan War Commission:

Daniel P. Fata of Massachusetts.

The message also announced that pursuant to Public Law 106-398, as amended by Public Law 108-7, the Chair, on behalf of the Majority Leader, and in consultation with the Chairmen of the Senate Committee on Armed Services and the Senate Committee on Finance, announces the appointment of the following individuals to serve as members of the United States-China Economic and Security Review Commission:

Carte P. Goodwin, of West Virginia for a term beginning January 1, 2022 and expiring December 31, 2023 (reappointment).

James Mann of New York for a term beginning January 1, 2022 and expiring December 31, 2023.

CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO UKRAINE—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 117-96)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed:

*To the Congress of the United States:*

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13660 of March 6, 2014, which was expanded in scope in Executive Order 13661 of March 16, 2014, Executive Order 13662 of March 20, 2014, and Executive Order 14065 of February 21, 2022, and under which additional steps were taken in Executive Order 13685 of December 19, 2014 and Executive Order 13849 of September 20, 2018, is to continue in effect beyond March 6, 2022.

The actions and policies of persons that undermine democratic processes and institutions in Ukraine; threaten its peace, security, stability, sovereignty, and territorial integrity; and contribute to the misappropriation of its assets, as well as the actions and policies of the Government of the Russian Federation, including its purported annexation of Crimea, its use of force in Ukraine, and its purported recognition of the so-called Donetsk People's Republic or Luhansk People's Republic regions of Ukraine, continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. Therefore, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13660 with respect to Ukraine.

JOSEPH R. BIDEN, Jr.  
THE WHITE HOUSE, March 2, 2022.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which the yeas and nays are ordered.

The House will resume proceedings on postponed questions at a later time.

SUPPORTING THE PEOPLE OF  
UKRAINE

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 956) to support the People of Ukraine.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

## H. RES. 956

Whereas, on January 21, 1990, more than 300,000 Ukrainians called for unity and independence from the Soviet Union by forming a human chain between the cities of Kyiv and Ivano-Frankivsk;

Whereas, on December 1, 1991, more than 90 percent of Ukrainian citizens voted in a national referendum in support of independence, with majorities in every region;

Whereas, on November 21, 2013, the Euromaidan protests began in favor of signing the European Union-Ukraine Association Agreement, resulting in the Revolution of Dignity and the removal of President Viktor Yanukovich by the Verkhovna Rada;

Whereas, in February and March of 2014, the Russian Federation invaded the peninsula of Crimea, illegally annexed the region, held a sham referendum, and claimed the territory to be a part of Russia;

Whereas, beginning in April 2014, the Russian Federation invaded the Donetsk and Luhansk regions of Eastern Ukraine instigating violence, stoking conflict, arming separatists, and spreading disinformation on Ukrainian soil;

Whereas, on July 17, 2014, Russian soldiers or Russian separatist fighters shot down the passenger flight MH17 flying over the Donbas with a Buk surface-to-air missile provided by the Russian Federation, killing all 298 innocent passengers on board;

Whereas, since February 2015, Russia has continued to fail to live up to its agreements under the Minsk agreements and the Russian-backed war in the Donbas has claimed approximately 14,000 lives;

Whereas the Russian military conducted a large-scale buildup in and around Ukraine in March and April 2021 under the guise of military exercises, leaving significant military equipment behind;

Whereas the Russian military initiated its most recent much larger military buildup in October 2021 that culminated in approximately 190,000 forces by the time of Russia's renewed full-scale incursion on February 24, 2022;

Whereas, on February 21, 2022, the State Duma of Russia passed a bill, approved by President Vladimir Putin, to officially recognize the self-proclaimed Luhansk People's Republic and Donetsk People's Republic as independent;

Whereas, on February 21, 2022, Vladimir Putin ordered Russian troops into the self-proclaimed Luhansk People's Republic and Donetsk People's Republic after recognizing their independence;

Whereas the decision to recognize the self-proclaimed Luhansk People's Republic and Donetsk People's Republic as independent and order Russian troops into that territory was not only in violation of international law, Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and the Minsk agreements, but also tantamount to a declaration of war;

Whereas, on February 24, 2022, Russian forces, enabled by Belarus, launched its unprovoked full-scale renewed invasion of a peaceful, independent country, Ukraine;

Whereas, since 2014, the United States has provided \$3,100,000,000 in security assistance to Ukraine, including over \$1,000,000,000 over the course of the last year, \$200,000,000 of

which was approved on December 27, 2021, and \$350,000,000 of which was approved on February 26, 2022;

Whereas it is the right of all countries to decide their own future, foreign policy, and security arrangements free from outside interference or coercion;

Whereas the Russian Federation repeatedly lied about their massive buildup of military forces around Ukraine and claimed that reports Russia would invade Ukraine were hysteria;

Whereas, on February 24, 2022, the G7 issued a statement condemning the "large-scale military aggression by the Russian Federation against the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine";

Whereas, on February 25, 2022, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization condemned "in the strongest possible terms Russia's horrifying attack on Ukraine", called on Russia "to turn back from the path of violence and aggression", and reaffirmed an "iron-clad" commitment to Article 5;

Whereas the European Commission, France, Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom, and Canada joined with the United States, committed to coordinated economic sanctions, including severe restrictions, against Russia's Central Bank and full blocking sanctions against Vladimir Putin;

Whereas United States leadership is integral to nations around the world in condemning and imposing costs on the Russian Federation for its illegal, full-scale, renewed invasion;

Whereas Russian forces have targeted civilians and have committed war crimes and crimes against humanity;

Whereas, in the days since the renewed full-scale invasion began, Russian citizens have taken to the streets in cities and towns across Russia to protest Putin's illegitimate and destructive war waged against a peaceful and sovereign Ukraine; and

Whereas the United States, along with allies in Europe, the Indo-Pacific, and others around the world, has been actively responding to Russia's unprovoked war of aggression against Ukraine with critical military, humanitarian, and financial support for Ukraine and the Ukrainian people: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

(1) demands an immediate cease-fire and the full withdrawal of Russian forces from Ukrainian territory;

(2) supports, unequivocally, Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity;

(3) backs the continued use of sanctions, in coordination with United States allies and partners, to fully isolate the Putin regime economically for its unprovoked aggression against Ukraine;

(4) urges the United States and its allies and partners to deliver additional and immediate defensive security assistance to help Ukraine address the armored, airborne, and other threats Ukraine is currently facing from Russian forces;

(5) commits to continuing to support resistance by the Ukrainian people as long as the Russian Federation continues to violate Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity;

(6) promises to continue to provide significant additional aid and humanitarian relief to Ukrainian refugees fleeing Russia's aggression, commends European partners for their efforts to relieve suffering on the ground, and urges the Russian Federation alongside United States allies and partners to guarantee safe passage out of the country;

(7) reaffirms its strong support for the security of United States allies and ironclad commitment to Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO);

(8) emphasizes that NATO's relationship with Ukraine is a matter only for Ukraine and the 30 NATO allies;

(9) pledges to support working with Europe and international partners to bolster Europe's energy security and reduce its dependence on Russian energy imports;

(10) underscores the importance of maintaining United States energy independence for the benefit of the American people and United States allies;

(11) reiterates that Crimea and the territories illegally controlled by the illegitimate Russian-controlled governments in Donetsk and Luhansk are sovereign Ukrainian territory;

(12) declares that the war in Ukraine, a democratic country, is the frontline of democracy and freedom versus authoritarianism represented by Putin's Russia;

(13) supports the right of the Russian people to protest, including the current protests against Putin's unprovoked war against Ukraine, and demands the immediate release of all those who have been unjustly detained in Russia for expressing their desire for peace;

(14) comprehends that strongmen, dictators, and authoritarians are watching the world's response to Putin's war against Ukraine and learning lessons for their own aggressive actions domestically and abroad, thereby making a strong and united response important to deter the expansion of territory by the use of military force beyond this crisis;

(15) states unambiguously that it will never recognize or support any illegitimate Russian-controlled leader or government installed through the use of force, and that only the people of Ukraine can choose their leadership through free and fair democratic elections without foreign interference, intervention, or coercion;

(16) commits to ensuring the illegitimate dictator of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko, is held accountable for permitting the use of Belarusian territory for, and committing Belarusian forces to, Putin's unprovoked renewed full-scale invasion against Ukraine; and

(17) stands steadfastly, staunchly, proudly, and fervently behind the Ukrainian people in their fight against the authoritarian Putin regime.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. MCCAUL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

## GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on H. Res. 956.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of my resolution, which I introduced with Representative SPARTZ, to demonstrate bipartisan congressional support for the Ukrainian people.

Today, we are witnessing the most devastating escalation of violence on the European Continent in decades.

Vladimir Putin has launched an unjustifiable, senseless war on a peaceful, sovereign nation, Ukraine. We are already seeing thousands of casualties, both Ukrainians and Russians, and hundreds of thousands of refugees fleeing to the European Union.

As we speak, Putin's army is encircling Ukrainian cities, including the capital of Kyiv. His forces are bombing indiscriminately, ruthlessly killing civilians, and destroying critical infrastructure.

In his despicable and utterly false claims to denazify Ukraine, he has bombed the memorial at Babyn Yar, where, just weeks ago, Representative SPARTZ and I stood with other Members of Congress at the site where tens of thousands were killed in massacres during the Holocaust. The streets we walked just a few weeks ago are now a battlefield, its citizens now soldiers.

Let us be clear. This is but one person's war. This is caused by one individual by the name of Vladimir Putin. It is his war.

Ukraine, the United States, and our allies have all actively engaged in a historic diplomatic push since before Russia marched their troops into the sovereign territory of Ukraine. Nevertheless, Putin chose the path of an unprovoked war instead.

It is a peaceful Ukraine that is pleading for a cease-fire so that diplomacy and sanity can triumph over bloodshed and madness.

Just this morning, the U.N. General Assembly held an emergency session that voted overwhelmingly against Russia's aggression. This vote reaffirms the values that we stand for and unequivocally demonstrates that the world stands with Ukraine.

In this dark time, the United States has helped usher unprecedented amounts of assistance from the United States, Europe, and our allies and partners from all around the world, from North Africa to North America to the Indo-Pacific, to aid Ukraine in defense of its nation. I believe we must sustain that assistance as long as Ukrainians fight for a democratic future free from Russian oppression.

The defensive security assistance we have provided and continue to provide Ukraine to help fend off its autocratic invader is absolutely critical.

Also, it is of utmost importance that we continue to surge humanitarian aid to Ukraine and the countries in the region accepting the growing influx of refugees. As of yesterday, nearly 700,000 had left their homes, left their country to seek safety, unsure of whether they will ever again see their homes. Estimates project that that number will quickly reach into the millions, as well as those who are displaced but remain in Ukraine.

Our allies in Europe have acted admirably, so they have been accepting those fleeing the destruction. We must do our part to help them as well.

Amidst all the bloodshed, we are seeing astounding courage displayed by

President Zelensky, the Ukrainian Government, and, above all, the Ukrainian people. We are also seeing the unity of the transatlantic alliance, more unified than ever in the face of Vladimir Putin's war.

The people of Ukraine must continue to hear a message of loud and clear support from us, the United States Congress. They must see that we see their suffering, that we stand with them in their fight against an authoritarian invader, and that we will continue to usher as much support to their cause as the United States can muster.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution outlines the plan and sheds an indisputable light on the atrocities the Putin regime and the Russian military are committing. It demands an immediate cease-fire and full withdrawal of Russian forces from Ukraine. It backs additional coordinated economic measures to hold Putin accountable.

It reaffirms our NATO Article 5 commitments, reaffirms Ukrainian sovereignty over Crimea and Donbas. It highlights the unprecedented global multilateral efforts the Biden administration has helped usher.

It states our commitment in the United States Congress to support the Ukrainian people throughout this terrifying ordeal and delivers perhaps the most important message a resolution can deliver right now, that the House of Representatives will never ever recognize any illegitimate government that Putin hopes to install in Ukraine. It is up to the Ukrainian people and the Ukrainian people alone to choose their political leadership and their future.

I support this resolution, and I want to offer my sincerest thanks to Representative SPARTZ, but also to my ranking member. We worked diligently on this resolution, to make sure that this was a bipartisan resolution. I appreciate Ranking Member MCCAUL for his friendship and the way that we work together now, especially on this resolution.

Democrat and Republican leadership worked collectively also. For working with me, I want to thank them. They have worked with me for what I believe is a very strong message, a unified message, to support the people of Ukraine.

It is also a unified message to Vladimir Putin, whose objective was to divide us. He would have loved to have divided us from our European allies, loved to divide us from NATO, loved to divide us from within.

But with this resolution, it becomes crystal clear: Mr. Putin, you can't win this. We are going to stand against you, and we are going to preserve democracy because that is what is at stake here.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, let me just thank Chairman MEEKS for his leadership.

This is really a historic time, not for only this Nation, but the world, for Ukraine. It is a time when we come together, not as Republicans or Democrats, but as Americans in strong support of the people of Ukraine.

I also want to thank Congresswoman VICTORIA SPARTZ, who is from Ukraine, who knows this story firsthand, and who very passionately has told her story about what it means, a country that has endured Hitler, a country that has endured Stalin, and now a country that is enduring Mr. Putin and Russian aggression.

As we stand here, Ukrainians are fighting for their country and for their very lives. Vladimir Putin has launched the largest attack in Europe since World War II.

□ 1430

His war machine has unleashed a brutal barrage of missiles and rockets on innocent Ukrainian civilians. In fact, there are 40 miles just north of Kyiv of tanks and military weaponry that is getting ready to go in and encircle the capital city.

But the people of Ukraine are inspiring the world with their bravery in the face of this, of Putin's evil and unprovoked attack. Fathers and mothers, teachers and shop owners, taxi drivers and students are all taking up arms, making Molotov cocktails, joining Ukrainian soldiers to defend their country.

They are standing in front of the tanks, standing in front of the tanks. I have seen a child standing in front of a tank just like Tiananmen Square and the images coming out that are sent around the world so we can all witness this, this war against humanity and human rights, war crimes.

They are risking their lives to fight for freedom, and that is what this Nation stands for, freedom and democracy.

Despite the terror inflicted upon them by Putin's bombs and rockets, the Ukrainian people have courageously refused to relent. Vladimir Putin has underestimated them. He has underestimated their strength and their bravery. The resiliency of the Ukrainian people has been an inspiration, really, for the world.

We were told in our briefings, well, this will last 2 or 3 days, but they have stood up. Putin needs to understand that he has miscalculated, and this will cost him a very, very high price. He has underestimated the strength and bravery to his own peril.

So I am pleased that we are able to come together, not as Republicans or Democrats, as I said, but really, as Americans, as we should, to express and send a strong message in support of the people of Ukraine and against this tyrant and this monster who is savagely killing civilians, as I speak.

We have all seen the images of the women and the children and the refugees as they leave their fathers and husbands behind who are left to fight this war.

This resolution really does one thing: to tell the world in one united voice that the United States of America stands opposed to oppression, that we stand with the people of Ukraine, and we stand against Mr. Putin's aggression. We must ensure that Putin fails, and I believe long term, he will.

I am hopeful that today's resolution will also lead to additional constructive bipartisan steps to properly arm the Ukrainians in any way possible, as they have told us, we don't need your troops, but we need your weapons to fight against the Russians.

You know, there was a tweet that came out from a dead Russian soldier who sent a text to his mother, saying, I thought they were going to welcome us, that we were liberating them. And yet I am seeing Ukrainians and children being run over by our tanks. And he says to his mother, this is the worst thing I have ever seen.

He lies. He is deceptive. He lied to his own people that he is liberating these Ukrainians who are oppressed by the Russians. This is no liberation. This is not a liberation ceremony.

This is tyranny at its worst, and oppression. We need to continue to support them as long as even one Ukrainian citizen continues to stand up to Russia's tyranny.

As in February 1941, facing a devastating bombing campaign by the Nazis—we can see the parallels here—this is similar to Hitler invading Poland.

When they talked about the blitz, Winston Churchill made a direct plea to the United States for assistance, and it is timeless. It actually resonates today. He said, "Put your confidence in us. . . . We shall not fail or falter; we shall not weaken or tire. Neither the sudden shock of battle, nor the long-drawn trials of vigilance and exertion will wear us down. Give us the tools, and we will finish the job."

Mr. Speaker, this is what the Ukrainian people want. It is what they are asking for. It is what they need. It is what the United States of America and our NATO allies will deliver.

Today, facing the onslaught of Putin's missiles and tanks, the Ukrainian President, Zelensky, a most courageous leader, as we have seen, who didn't run away from his country like President Ghani. He is in the bunker right now, knowing that his very life and his survival is on the line.

He made the same plea to us, and today, we have the opportunity to tell Ukraine that we have confidence in them by supporting this measure, that we will give them the tools they need to finish the job.

So let me, once again, thank the chairman. This is when the Foreign Affairs Committee is at its best, when we come together as Americans. As ELIOT ENGEL always said, partisanship stops at the water's edge, and I firmly believe that commitment as well.

I urge my Members to support this. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MEEKS: Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. CICILLINE), who just recently was walking the streets of Kyiv, talking to the people, listening to them, and their determination to preserve their democracy. Mr. DAVID CICILLINE.

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman MEEKS for his extraordinary leadership in this very important moment.

I rise in strong support of H. Res. 956 and in solidarity with the people of Ukraine.

On February 24, Vladimir Putin thought he was making another step toward realizing his delusional pursuit of reconstituting the U.S.S.R. when he ordered the brutal invasion of the sovereign and peaceful nation of Ukraine.

Vladimir Putin thought the Ukrainian people would give in quickly to the violence and abandon their freedoms.

Vladimir Putin thought President Zelensky would flee and capitulate to Russian demands.

Vladimir Putin thought the world would turn a blind eye toward Russian aggression.

Vladimir Putin thought wrong.

In fact, as Chairman MEEKS said, we saw firsthand the determination and the will of the Ukrainian people to fight to preserve their own country and their own freedoms. They are doing that today, fighting day by day, hour by hour, to protect their country and secure a free and democratic future for themselves and their families.

The free world has rallied together to impose devastating sanctions against Russia, against the Russian economy, and to hold the Putin regime and his enablers to account for their crimes.

I strongly support this resolution, and I know the United States and its allies are united behind the people of Ukraine, behind the values of freedom and democracy and against the tyranny of a thuggish dictator, Vladimir Putin.

I thank Chairman MEEKS for his extraordinary leadership and thank Ranking Member MCCAUL as well.

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, I yield as much time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Indiana (Mrs. SPARTZ), the lead Republican on this resolution, who was born and raised in Ukraine. Her grandmother is still there and has told her the stories of Hitler and Stalin and how bad this situation is on the ground.

Mrs. SPARTZ. Mr. Speaker, I am very humbled to stand on the floor of this great institution with my colleagues from both sides of the aisle to co-lead this important resolution and to show that this greatest country, the leaders of the free world, are going to stand up to the atrocities and tyrannies that are happening right now.

I am very proud to have a strong, freedom-fighting Ukrainian heritage. I actually was born in the Soviet Union, when Ukraine was under that evil country.

I am so proud that strong, brave Ukrainians are willing to fight again and again to be free. It should inspire all of us. Their bravery and actions are unbelievable. It should teach us, and maybe remind us, what it means to be a free country and how hard it is to get your rights and freedoms back when you lose them. We had so many people die for our freedoms, so let's value and cherish them.

I am very happy to see that this institution, when times are tough, when we have to get together, we can get together and show our allies we will stand together and show our adversaries and enemies we will stand together. Not just stand together, but we will also lead the world.

I also want to tell the Ukrainian people that the American people are inspired and humbled. They see your struggles and pray with you and stand with you. This resolution from we, the people, from this United States Congress, is evidence of it.

I also want to tell the Russian people—I actually have some Don Cossack heritage—I know it is tough for you. I know what President Putin has done to you. It is awful. But you need to have the backbone to stand up, or we will find you in history worse than you could imagine. So you stand up and stop this atrocity before it causes more damage. What is happening there on the ground, it is not a war. It is slaughtering, killing of the Ukrainian people. You are killing your fellow Orthodox Christians and East Slavs, and they went through history with oppression and suppression. How can you stand with that? I know that your propaganda is strong. I know they tell you things that are awful. But open your eyes. Don't be part of it. Tell your government that they have to stop this elimination and extinction of people.

I also want to thank everyone here in this country for loving freedoms, for supporting freedoms, and being willing to be part of this challenge on the right side. Our actions should be decisive. In times like this, they require strong leadership and strong actions.

We, as an independent branch of our Government—I always say we are co-equal, but first among equals because we do have the power of the purse and the power of war. So we have a lot of powers for a reason, and that is why our Founding Fathers gave us this power, because we are the people who should put pressure on our President to be more decisive and strong and have some stronger actions.

On sanctions, we have to be tougher. We need to go after the energy sector. We need to make sure that a lot of oligarchs that are not on the list are there, they should be on the list, the key oligarchs. They understand that it is not just the Russian people that will be feeling the pain, that already they suppressed and stole money from them, but they will start feeling the pain.

We also need to make sure that we will have a way to affect the financial system much more decisively.

We also need to make sure that these war crimes are going to go to international courts, and these people that make decisions on killing, on genocide, and using illegal weapons will also bear some responsibility.

□ 1445

I also think we have a responsibility to provide safe passage in the humanitarian corridor, and I hope we will have other allies working with us and help us on that.

But most important, we need to make sure that we will provide proper defensive legal aid to the Ukrainians that they can defend themselves from this extermination before it is too late. We must act, and I am very honored to be part of this effort to show that we are willing to lead as this institution.

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ALLRED), who was walking the streets of Ukraine with us just a few weeks ago.

Mr. ALLRED. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support this bipartisan resolution supporting the people of Ukraine.

As the chairman said, I was in Ukraine just a few weeks ago, in the beautiful city of Kyiv. I met the very people who today, despite facing a ruthless enemy, are waging an inspiring campaign to save their democracy, including a young woman who told me she was going to get her white wine and Kalashnikov and defend her country. And she is.

This resolution tells the world, and most importantly the Ukrainian people, that the United States Congress stands with you. President Biden has used every tool at his disposal to unite the world in punishing Vladimir Putin for his unprovoked and unjustified war, and Congress will act to provide more resources to that effort.

Because our work continues to further help Ukraine defend itself and further isolate Russia. Putin has a choice: To pursue his long-term strategic goals or to continue this unnecessary and illegal war on Ukraine. He cannot do both.

We are united as a country and as a Congress in standing with the people of Ukraine in their fight for their democracy. I urge all of my colleagues to vote "yes."

Mr. McCAUL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee and one of the longest serving Members of Congress as well.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, over the weekend I met with over 100 Ukrainian Americans in my district office in Freehold, New Jersey. They told me how their families and friends in Ukraine are coping with Putin's barbaric invasion, the loss of life, the many who are wounded, and their escalating concern as the bombs and missiles rain down on civilian targets.

According to UNHCR, about 876,000 Ukrainian refugees have left, that is as

of March 1st, and about half have found safety in Poland. Most are women, children, and the elderly.

Despite facing an existential threat, the free world continues to be astonished by the Ukrainian people's strength, courage, resiliency, and desire to fight. Interviews coming out of Ukraine, especially in the bunkers, underscore the Ukrainian people's resolve.

Let me just say how great it is to see Zelensky, who has stood up. He is a true hero and a tenacious leader, the President of Ukraine. This is Putin's war, and he is a war criminal, Mr. Speaker. Putin's puppet in Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko, is also a war criminal, and like Serbian Slobodan Milosevic and President Charles Taylor of Liberia, they need to be prosecuted and held to account for their war crimes.

I would remind my colleagues that in a 2014 speech, right here, to a joint session of the Congress, Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko did ask the Obama administration for military assistance, which he did not get, to defend against Putin's invasion of Crimea. He said, "One cannot win the war with blankets."

He got several standing ovations, all of us were on our feet. But he got only more blankets. Let's learn from that.

Last June, as Russia deployed more combat forces on the border, Politico and others reported that there were delays in providing the kind of military aid that Zelensky really wanted. I did ask Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman today for a timeline, on how did this all come about. Did he ask for more and did not get it? We need to know this to learn from it, so we get it right the next time.

Mr. Speaker, over the weekend I met with over one hundred Ukrainian Americans at my district office in Freehold.

They told me how their families and friends in Ukraine are coping with Putin's barbaric invasion—the loss of life, the wounded and escalating concern as bombs & missiles rain down on civilian targets.

They appealed for help.

The humanitarian crisis is exploding—both inside the country and for those seeking refuge.

As of March 1st, according to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)—there are more than 876,000 Ukrainian refugees—with about half finding safety in Poland.

Most are women, children, and the elderly.

Despite facing an existential threat, however, the free world continues to be astonished by the Ukrainian people's strength, courage, resiliency and desire to fight.

Interviews coming out of Ukraine—including in bunkers—underscore the Ukrainian people's resolve.

Under their extraordinarily heroic and tenacious leader—President Volodymyr Zelensky—the people of Ukraine are rallying to defend their beloved homeland.

This is Putin's war—and he is a war criminal.

Putin's puppet in Belarus—Alexander Lukashenko—is also a war criminal.

And like Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic and President Charles Taylor of Liberia, they need to be prosecuted and held to account for war crimes.

Now more than ever, the United States and our allies must provide much-needed military equipment and humanitarian aid to the people of Ukraine as they fight to defend their freedom from a brutal dictatorship.

I would remind my colleagues that in a 2014 speech to a joint session of the U.S. Congress, Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko asked the Obama Administration for military assistance—which he didn't get—to defend against Putin's invasion of Crimea and said "One cannot win the war with blankets".

He got several standing ovations—and more blankets.

Last June, as Russia deployed more combat forces on Ukraine's border, Politico and others reported that a modest military aid package had been put on hold. Key items under consideration for the package included short-range air defense systems, small arms and more anti-tank weapons . . .

Robust stockpiles of weapons could have bought deterrence—and if necessary, a means for the Ukrainians to defend themselves from Putin's violence.

At a Foreign Affairs hearing earlier today, I asked Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman what Ukrainian President Zelensky asked for over the past year—including air defense systems—and what he did or didn't get from the Biden Administration?

Her response may come in a closed door hearing next week.

Comprehensive economic sanctions must degrade Putin's capacity to wage war.

Some highly efficacious sanctions have not yet been imposed, however.

Russian oil revenues help fuel Putin's aggression in Ukraine. Not a drop of Russian oil exports should reach our shores.

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CASTRO), the chair of the Subcommittee on International Development, International Organizations, and Global Corporate Social Impact.

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of House Resolution 956 to condemn Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Earlier today, the United Nations General Assembly voted overwhelmingly to condemn Russia's invasion of Ukraine and demand an immediate withdrawal of their forces from Ukraine.

Only four nations out of 193 stood with Russia. 140 stood with Ukraine. The world is united in condemning this invasion, and the House of Representatives must speak as one and lead the way.

As we debate, Russian attacks on Ukrainian civilians continue. Hundreds of thousands huddle in bomb shelters. Over 600,000 Ukrainians have already fled the country. Vladimir Putin is on a disastrous quest to rebuild the Russian empire at the expense of Ukrainian sovereignty.

This should be a simple vote.

Now is our chance to show that Congress stands with the people of Ukraine. Now is our time to do what is

right. That is why I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. McCAUL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT), the ranking member on the Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific, Central Asia, and Nonproliferation.

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. I also want to thank Chairman MEEKS and Representative SPARTZ for their leadership on this very important measure.

Last week, the world watched in horror as Vladimir Putin shattered the peace in Europe and began an unprovoked assault on Ukraine and its innocent people. Put simply, this is the largest land war in Europe since World War II, a war that we hoped would never come again. We cannot condemn this senseless, brutal, and illegal invasion in strong enough terms.

In the face of this onslaught, the Ukrainian people are demonstrating incredible bravery as Russia brings to bear its overwhelming military firepower, at least in terms of soldiers and weaponry and equipment. But in terms of the combatants on the ground, one side is fighting for conquest. The other side is fighting for their homes and their families, and most importantly, their freedom.

Thus far, at least, freedom is prevailing. The Ukrainians, and President Zelensky especially, are rallying the free world and demonstrating once again that free men and women would rather die than submit to the forces of tyranny.

As we stand here today to support the people of Ukraine, let us remember that their fight for freedom is far from over. We must ensure that they get the support that they need, that Putin is held accountable for his war crimes—and they are war crimes—and that he does not snuff out forever the light of democracy in Ukraine because that is what he wants to do. Freedom must prevail.

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY), the president of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, who has seen with his own eyes the unity that we now have with our NATO allies.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend, the distinguished chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee and my friend, the distinguished ranking member.

Today is a test for liberal democracy all over the world, and particularly for us as Americans because today we witness the cost in blood, sweat, and tears in the fight for freedom that liberal democracy represents and provides: The simple desire of another people to have what we have and that all too often we take for granted, the desire to be a free people, under no one's shadow, under no one's yoke, and they are willing to put their bodies on the line to fight for that simple principle.

Weak punditry all too often has cast the opinion that liberal democracy is

on the decline. Well, not in Ukraine and not here. And not with our allies and not at the United Nations. Because the scales have fallen from eyes. The threat is real, and so are the stakes.

All of us today must be Ukrainian. All of us must join that fight. All of us must understand that freedom, liberal democracy are resilient but also fragile. They must always be perfected but also defended.

This resolution today is not just about an expression of congressional solidarity. It is a recommitment by this body in the principles that founded this Nation that another people are fighting for to gain today.

I urge passage and proudly support this effort.

Mr. McCAUL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from the great State of Texas (Mr. PFLUGER), a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Mr. PFLUGER. Mr. Speaker, today is a sad day, a tragic day, as we witness the horrific images that are coming out of Ukraine.

I was there just 4½ short weeks ago. I met with President Zelensky. I listened to the people on the streets of Kyiv. President Zelensky is a lion of a leader. He has displayed courage to the West. When he said, "I don't need a ride, I need ammunition," I think that all of us should look at that, we should listen to that. The time to act is now. We don't have time to wait. Now is the time to act to help our Ukrainian partners. He didn't ask for troops inside Ukraine. He is asking for help.

I hope that we will put Midland over Moscow, as the President last night in this Chamber said that it is time to buy American product. Energy security is national security, and that is absolutely what this body should be doing is putting our own energy security into the hands of our partners and allies so that they can defend and deter against the malign influence of Vladimir Putin.

Our heart and our prayers go out to the people of Ukraine, and our thanks to President Zelensky for his leadership.

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR), the cofounder and co-chair of the Ukraine Caucus, who has worked on this her entire congressional career.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman MEEKS for his unyielding leadership on this important bill and Ranking Member McCAUL for setting a tone for this entire Congress that we succeed when we work together, particularly in a cause as great as this, liberty for a country that voted for independence. Thirty years ago, 90 percent of the people voted to be independent of tyrannical Russia, and today now they are fighting again.

The bipartisan nature of this bill today would warm the hearts of great American leaders, like President and General Dwight D. Eisenhower or Gen-

eral George Marshall or President John Kennedy or President Ronald Reagan, because across Europe they fully understood how many American lives were given to the cause of liberty so that we, their descendants, would pass it on to our descendants.

We are here today in that fight because Ukraine is the scrimmage line for liberty in Europe today. The valor of the people of Ukraine against the Russian state is extraordinary. Our young people are learning what the price of liberty is, sadly, and the people of Ukraine are inspiring the world. We think so much of their valor, their fight, and their desire to join the world of free nations. May God bless them and may God bless America, and thank you for understanding a united America always wins for liberty.

Mr. McCAUL. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE), a dynamic Representative from the great State of Texas.

□ 1500

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding, and I rise enthusiastically to support H. Res. 956 and as well to make mention of H. Res. 943 that was introduced by myself and STEVE COHEN on February 25.

Let me salute this resolution that is bipartisan that immediately calls on a ceasefire by Putin. This is Putin's war. H. Res. 943 has been affirmed by its call for the shutting down of our airways to Russian carriers, and that has been done.

But the real point is that we are now standing firmly for democracy and the fight of individual grandmothers and young people and individual Ukrainians with their bare hands and with their weapons that have been given to fight for democracy. But the real question that we are also standing for, and thank you for the United Nations vote, is that Vladimir Putin is a war criminal who is killing children.

Mitka, a parliamentarian that I met at the OSCE of which we were a part of meeting in Lithuania and Vienna, talking to the soldiers that were on the border of Belarus and Lithuania—thank you to those soldiers that are now placed, almost 100,000 U.S. soldiers—is that Putin is killing without cause. He is killing grandmothers. He is killing children. Can we tolerate this bloodshed? No, we will not. And we will stand with this resolution to demand that democracy stands in the region and that we denounce his actions.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 956, a resolution condemning the unprovoked aggression and invasion ordered by Vladimir Putin, the authoritarian head of the Russian Federation against the sovereign nation of Ukraine and supporting the right of the people of Ukraine to freely determine their future, including their country's relationship with other nations and international organizations, without interference, intimidation, or coercion by other countries.



I thank the Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Congressman MEEKS of New York, for introducing this bipartisan resolution and urge all Members to support it to show the solidarity of the people of the United States with the people of Ukraine.

Mr. Speaker, I support this resolution because it calls upon and commends the Biden Administration to honor and abide by the commitments undertaken by the United States pursuant to Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty, signed at Washington, District of Columbia, on April 4, 1949, and entered into force on August 24, 1949.

The resolution also commits this body to the promotion and protection of democratic values, transparent and accountable government institutions, and support for needed economic structural reforms in Ukraine, including in the fiscal, energy, pension, and banking sectors, among others.

The resolution also calls upon and commends the Biden Administration for assembling and working with an international coalition of the world's leading nations to ensure that all nations refuse to recognize the illegal invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation and to ensure that the Russian Federation is held accountable and sustain maximum economic damage from the imposition of sanctions as a consequence of its utter disregard for international law and norms.

I am particularly pleased that the Biden Administration has adopted the recommendation advanced in H. Res. 943, a resolution I introduced on February 25, 2002 condemning this unprovoked attack by the Russian Federation, to ban all Russian airlines, including Aeroflot, from entering the airspace of the United States or landing on its soil.

The United States is strongly committed to the sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity of Ukraine.

The United States strongly supports efforts to assist Ukraine to defend its territory against military aggression by the Russian Federation and by separatist and paramilitary forces.

Ukraine was the second-most populous and powerful of the fifteen republics of the former and disintegrated Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the hub of the union's agricultural production, defense industries, and military arsenal.

In the three decades since gaining its independence, Ukraine has sought to forge its own path as a sovereign state and sought closer economic, social, and political ties with the free market and democratic nations of the West.

Since 2013, the Russian Federation has undertaken a campaign of political, economic, and military aggression against Ukraine, including the shooting down of Malaysia Airlines Flight 17, a civilian airliner, by Russian-backed Ukrainian separatists using a Russian-made missile taking the lives of all 298 innocent persons on board.

In February 2014, the military of the Russia Federation, without merit or cause, invaded the eastern part of the free and independent country of Ukraine, including the Crimean Peninsula, and backed a separatist insurgency in the Donbass region in eastern Ukraine, where fighting has killed over 14,000 people.

The United States, a strategic ally of Ukraine, reacted swiftly to the Russian invasion, condemning the military action in strong and bipartisan fashion, and providing military,

humanitarian, and non-military financial assistance to the determined but beleaguered nation of Ukraine, which since 2014 has totaled approximately \$1.5 billion.

On September 14, 2014, the House of Representatives adopted H. Res. 726, a resolution supporting the right of the people of Ukraine to freely determine their future, including their country's relationship with other nations and international organizations, without interference, intimidation, or coercion by other countries, and committed itself to solidarity with the people of Ukraine.

Interference and unprovoked aggressions by the Russia Federation ordered and led by Vladimir Putin continued unabated, including the mobilization and stationing of 150,000 Russian troops surrounding Ukraine and armed forces positioned in Belarus to attack Ukraine from the north, including war planes and offensive missile systems, and the movement of Russian naval vessels in the Black Sea to Ukraine's south, including amphibious assault ships, missile cruisers, and submarines, and the positioning of blood and medical equipment into position on their border.

Vladimir Putin sought authorization from the Russian parliament to use military force outside of Russian territory by staging a fraudulent on-camera meeting of his Security Council to grandstand for the Russian public and by recognizing sovereign Ukrainian territory as so-called independent republics in clear violation, again, of international law, all of which was intended to set the stage for further pretexts and further provocations by Russia Federation to make further aggressions against Ukraine by military action.

Vladimir Putin rejected every good-faith effort the United States and its allies and partners made to address mutual security concerns through dialogue to avoid needless conflict and avert human suffering.

On February 23, 2022, the Russia Federation military, at the direction of Vladimir Putin, began a premeditated brutal assault on the people of Ukraine without provocation, without justification, without necessity, making outlandish, false, and baseless claims that Ukraine was about to invade and launch a war against Russia and that Ukraine was prepared to use chemical weapons, and that Ukraine had committed a genocide.

These actions were taken by Vladimir Putin at the very moment that the United Nations Security Council was meeting to stand up for Ukraine's sovereignty to stave off invasion, culminating in missile strikes on historic cities across Ukraine, followed by air raids and the invasion of Russian tanks and troops.

Mr. Speaker, through this resolution the United States strongly condemns and opposes the unprovoked invasion and egregious act of aggression against sovereign state of Ukraine by the Russian Federation, the most provocative and destabilizing act of foreign aggression since the 1938 invasion of the Sudetenland by the Third Reich led by Adolph Hitler.

I ask all members to join me in voting for H. Res. 956 to support the right of the people of Ukraine to freely determine their future, including their country's relationship with other nations and international organizations, without interference, intimidation, or coercion by other countries.

Mr. McCAUL. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GREEN), a dynamic Representative.

Mr. GREEN of Texas. And still I rise, Mr. Speaker. And I rise on this historic occasion to compliment the chairperson and the ranking member of the Foreign Affairs Committee. What they are doing today will be hailed in the annals of history as that which was necessary to help our friends in a time of need.

Mr. Speaker, those who say that if we leave the world alone, the world will leave us alone are wrong. The world will find its way to our door just as it is now because Dr. King's words are so right. Life is an inescapable network of mutuality tied to a single garment of destiny. What impacts one directly impacts all indirectly. What is happening to Ukraine directly impacts us indirectly.

We have a duty, a responsibility, and an obligation to help them and to make sure that when the final word is written, it will be said that we did all that we could to protect democracy.

Mr. McCAUL. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, it is now my honor to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), the distinguished majority leader of the United States House of Representatives.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend, the chairman of this committee, for yielding. We have traveled in various parts of the world together. We have seen pain, and we have seen progress. We are seeing pain now, and all I can say with respect to the remarks that were just made by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GREEN), amen.

I thank Mr. McCAUL for his working not as a Republican, and I thank Mr. MEEKS not as a Democrat, but as Americans, Americans confronted with a crisis, a crisis for democracy, a crisis for the global community. I thank them both because they have, in the best traditions of this House and of this country, worked together to bring to the floor a resolution, which, indeed, speaks to the pain and to the moral responsibility of all those who love freedom and democracy.

Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, as Russian missiles rained down on the cities of his country, Ukraine's heroic President, President Zelensky, virtually addressed the European Parliament in Brussels.

Mr. Speaker, President Zelensky spoke of a horrendous missile attack that had just struck the main square of the besieged city of Kharkiv. "This," he said, is "the largest square in Europe . . . it is called 'freedom square.'" He went on to say: "And believe you me, in every square today, no matter what it is called, it is going to be called 'freedom square.' In every city of our country. Nobody is going to break us. We are strong."

Frankly, Mr. Speaker, he didn't have to tell us that. We have seen that strength. We have seen that courage. We have seen that determination in the face of overwhelming force confronting them.

These past 7 days, the people of Ukraine have indeed shown the world they are strong, they are courageous, they are united, and they are resolved to defend their freedom and their democracy.

Mr. Speaker, I served as co-chairman of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, otherwise known as the Helsinki Commission, for 10 years from 1985 to 1995. It was a historic time where democracy won the Cold War. It was in the final years of that Cold War that Ukraine in the nineties emerged and was guaranteed essentially by the international community, but certainly by Russia and the United States, that they would be a sovereign nation not just in the east but in the west as well.

I had the opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to travel to Kyiv, to Riga, to Vilnius, to Tallinn, to Sofia, to other cities behind the Iron Curtain on a relatively regular basis during those 10 years, certainly in the 6 years from 1985 to 1991. In each place I saw a "freedom square" where either before or shortly after my visit people would gather to demand the right to choose their own future, their own leaders, and their own laws.

I saw in many others who traveled to those cities and to those countries a yearning, I saw the commitment to democracy, their courage and determination.

President Zelensky is correct: "Wherever democracy thrives, every public square is a 'freedom square.'" It may have another name, but it is a "freedom square."

Americans have sacrificed much over the generations to secure our freedoms and to our great credit the freedom of others around the world.

I tell people, Mr. Speaker, that America is the nation that had the most hegemony of power and used it so without acquiring the nations that it protected or imposing its will on the nations that it protected which is the least acquisitive superpower in the history of the world.

Americans have sacrificed much over the generations to secure our freedoms and the freedoms of others. The land of the free and the home of the brave.

Now, the tyranny and autocracy of Vladimir Putin tests us again.

Though American forces will not be engaged directly in this war, that does not mean that America is sitting on the sidelines. Far from it. And we must be engaged. This resolution speaks to engagement.

President Biden has unified not only NATO but a broad coalition of the world's democratic nations and those committed to the post-war order of respecting peace, borders, and, yes, diplomacy.

Dozens of nations have partnered to stand up to Putin and to support the

freedom fighters in Ukraine. Together, we have imposed punishing sanctions that are already hurting Putin's regime.

We are already seeing thousands of Russians taking to the streets in their country to demand that Putin end this unjust war, this unprovoked war, this criminal war, and stop the unnecessary death and destruction on both sides for which Vladimir Putin alone bears responsibility.

Today, this House, the people's House representing the greatest democracy in history, the leading democratic nation in the world, is expressing our support for the Ukrainian people in their struggle for freedom and self-government.

I hope and I urge that this resolution pass with not a single negative vote. Let there be no mistake throughout the globe that, yes, we have differences between Republicans and Democrats, but we in this House are all Americans committed to freedom, committed to democracy, committed to the peaceful relations between nations.

It recognizes the egregious and inhumane actions undertaken by the Russian military at Putin's command, including the shelling of civilian targets and the killing of innocents in order to instill fear and weaken Ukrainian resolve.

We know that resolve, however, Mr. Speaker, will not be broken. We have seen it in the eyes of the President, and we have seen it in the eyes of the citizens in those freedom squares.

This resolution further recognizes importantly that Russian aggression against Ukraine did not begin last week. It began as soon as the Ukrainian people rejected a Putin-backed autocrat, established a true democracy, and sought the security and protection of stronger bonds with its fellow democracies in Europe and NATO, which, of course, it had every right as a sovereign nation to do.

Putin sent his forces to occupy Crimea. Mr. Speaker, in my view we were not as determined that that should not happen at that time. We must not repeat that mistake. Putin instigated a violent, separatist uprising in the Donbas region that has festered for 8 long years.

His unprovoked and unjustifiable invasion of Ukraine comes after it became increasingly clear that the separatists could not achieve Putin's expansionist aims on their own. He tried to do it surreptitiously through agents. It did not succeed, so he took the next step, a tragic, criminal step.

This resolution also makes clear that the United States will continue to support Ukraine by providing both military and humanitarian assistance while maintaining painful sanctions against Putin for as long as he pursues this war of choice.

In no small part, this resolution puts into action the promise that President Kennedy made when he took office at the height of the Cold War.

This will not be a free war for any of us in the free world. It is going to cost

us something. Gas prices may go up. But we want to stand on freedom's side.

I am in politics largely because John Kennedy ran for President as I was at the University of Maryland, and I was inspired by his call to service.

I would urge all of you to read one more time John Kennedy's inaugural address. It is an extraordinarily inspiring address, an address not only to the American people, but to the entire world. And in it he said this: "Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and success of liberty," and of those freedom squares to which President Zelensky referred.

□ 1515

Mr. Speaker, Americans and our allies are being asked to pay a price, to bear a burden, to meet some hardship in the days and weeks and months ahead, not to sustain fire, not to live in buildings being bombed, not to have to move from their home to a refuge or another country, but some hardship.

I know that our fellow Americans are up to the task. They have always been up to the task because those who say we take freedom for granted, who say the cost is too high, the burden too great, have always underestimated the American people.

When we see Putin's corrupt, evil, and menacing grab for power and tyrannical control, we are reminded of the tyrants and evil ideologies that Americans have fought and vanquished through our collective commitment and shared sacrifices.

Mr. Speaker, today, let us make this House Freedom Square. Let us stand with those who are assaulted by a tyrant.

The generation before mine, John Kennedy referred to England as "Why England Slept." If we do not meet this tyrant now, we will pay greatly later.

I urge my colleagues to stand with these brave Ukrainians who stand for freedom and liberty and international law. Let us all overwhelmingly, unanimously vote for this resolution and send a message, not just to Putin but to all the tyrants of the world who would test us once again, that we will not blink.

Mr. McCAUL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the leader for his remarks. I think it is very important this Chamber passes this resolution unanimously to send one voice to Putin that the American people stand for the Ukrainian people and against Mr. Putin.

I think it is no coincidence—to me, it is fitting—that today is Texas Independence Day. My forefathers fought for freedom and liberty for the same purpose, from tyranny.

Since 2014, the world has watched the Ukrainian people fight to forge their own destiny in the face of violent attacks by Russia. They are facing down

Putin's missiles and tanks, risking life and limb for their freedom today.

As President Zelensky warned the Russian troops invading his country just a few days ago, as he sits in the bunker, putting his life on the line, he said: "If they try to take our country, our freedom, our lives, the lives of our children, we will be defending ourselves. . . . As you attack, it will be our faces you see, not our backs."

Today, we have the opportunity to honor his leadership and the bravery of the Ukrainian people, to send a strong message to these brave men and women that they are not alone, that the United States stands with them and will continue to stand with them for as long as it takes.

Mr. Speaker, again, I urge my colleagues to vote in support, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the camera of history is rolling on all of us today. What is happening today children yet unborn will be studying and looking at what we did, what we stood for, or did not. They will be studying in their history books whether or not when democracy was at stake, when sovereign nations were in peril, whether or not we stood up and stood out to protect freedom, sovereignty of states, independence, or not.

The fact of the matter is, if we don't stand up now, those same children that I am talking about may not be able to live in a democratic society. That is why this is so important.

Putin may think that he is encircling Kyiv now, but this United Nations vote, where 141 nations said they are not going to allow that to happen, is encircling Putin and his thugs. And we will stay there for as long as it takes until freedom rings because that is what this is all about.

I think of today those that I met when I was in Kyiv, those that I had dinner with, those that worked in our U.S. Embassy, those that were driving taxis. As I see the pictures of them walking these streets today in front of Russian tanks, unafraid—I saw a picture of a woman standing and pointing at a Russian soldier, saying they would die there before she gives up. That is what this is all about.

The words that the activist told me while I was in Kyiv, that we are ready to fight, just provide us the support that we need to protect our country and freedom.

Slava Ukraini. Glory to Ukraine and its people.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. McCAUL and Congresswoman SPARTZ for working with me so that we can make a bipartisan message right here on the people's floor.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS) that the House suspend the

rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 956.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3(s) of House Resolution 8, the yeas and nays are ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 426, nays 3, not voting 4, as follows:

[Roll No. 51]

YEAS—426

Adams	Cohen	Gottheimer
Aderholt	Cole	Granger
Aguilar	Comer	Graves (LA)
Allen	Connolly	Graves (MO)
Allred	Cooper	Green (TN)
Amodei	Correa	Green, Al (TX)
Armstrong	Costa	Greene (GA)
Arrington	Courtney	Griffith
Auchincloss	Craig	Grijalva
Axne	Crawford	Grothman
Babin	Crenshaw	Guest
Bacon	Crist	Guthrie
Baird	Crow	Harder (CA)
Balderson	Cuellar	Harris
Banks	Curtis	Harshbarger
Barr	Davidson	Hartzler
Barragán	Davidson	Hayes
Bass	Davis, Danny K.	Hern
Beatty	Davis, Rodney	Herrell
Bentz	Dean	Herrera Beutler
Bera	DeFazio	Hice (GA)
Bergman	DeGette	Higgins (LA)
Beyer	DeLauro	Higgins (NY)
Bice (OK)	DelBene	Hill
Biggs	Delgado	Himes
Bilirakis	Demings	Hinson
Bishop (GA)	DeSaulnier	Hollingsworth
Bishop (NC)	DesJarlais	Horsford
Blumenauer	Deutch	Houlahan
Blunt Rochester	Diaz-Balart	Hoyer
Boebert	Dingell	Hudson
Bonamici	Doggett	Huffman
Bourdeaux	Donalds	Huizenga
Bowman	Doyle, Michael	Issa
Boyle, Brendan	F.	Jackson
F.	Duncan	Jackson Lee
Brady	Dunn	Jacobs (CA)
Brooks	Ellzey	Jacobs (NY)
Brown (MD)	Emmer	Jayapal
Brown (OH)	Escobar	Jeffries
Brownley	Eshoo	Johnson (GA)
Buchanan	Espallat	Johnson (LA)
Buck	Estes	Johnson (OH)
Bucshon	Evans	Johnson (SD)
Budd	Fallon	Johnson (TX)
Burchett	Feenstra	Jones
Burgess	Ferguson	Jordan
Bush	Fischbach	Joyce (OH)
Bustos	Fitzgerald	Joyce (PA)
Calvert	Fitzpatrick	Kahele
Cammack	Fleischmann	Kaptur
Carbajal	Fletcher	Katko
Cárdenas	Fortenberry	Keating
Carey	Foster	Keller
Carl	Fox	Kelly (IL)
Carson	Frankel, Lois	Kelly (MS)
Carter (GA)	Franklin, C.	Kelly (PA)
Carter (LA)	Scott	Khanna
Carter (TX)	Fulcher	Kildee
Cartwright	Gaetz	Kilmer
Case	Gallagher	Kim (CA)
Casten	Gallego	Kim (NJ)
Castor (FL)	Garamendi	Kind
Castro (TX)	Garbarino	Kinzinger
Cawthorn	Garcia (CA)	Kirkpatrick
Chabot	Garcia (IL)	Krishnamoorthi
Cheney	Garcia (TX)	Kuster
Cherfilus-	Gibbs	Kustoff
McCormick	Gimenez	LaHood
Chu	Gohmert	LaMalfa
Cicilline	Golden	Lamb
Clark (MA)	Gomez	Lamborn
Clarke (NY)	Gonzales, Tony	Langevin
Cleaver	Gonzalez (OH)	Larsen (WA)
Cline	Gonzalez,	Larson (CT)
Cloud	Vicente	Latta
Clyburn	Good (VA)	LaTurner
Clyde	Gooden (TX)	Lawrence

Lawson (FL)	Obernolte	Smucker
Lee (CA)	Ocasio-Cortez	Soto
Lee (NV)	Omar	Spanberger
Leger Fernandez	Owens	Spartz
Lesko	Palazzo	Speier
Letlow	Pallone	Stansbury
Levin (CA)	Palmer	Stanton
Levin (MI)	Panetta	Stauber
Lieu	Pappas	Steel
Lofgren	Pascarell	Stefanik
Long	Payne	Steil
Loudermilk	Pelosi	Steube
Lowenthal	Pence	Stevens
Lucas	Perlmutter	Stewart
Luetkemeyer	Perry	Strickland
Luria	Peters	Suozzi
Lynch	Pfluger	Swalwell
Mace	Phillips	Takano
Malinowski	Pingree	Tenney
Malliotakis	Pocan	Thompson (CA)
Maloney,	Porter	Thompson (MS)
Carolyn B.	Posey	Thompson (PA)
Maloney, Sean	Pressley	Tiffany
Mann	Quigley	Timmons
Manning	Raskin	Titus
Mast	Reed	Tlaib
Matsui	Reschenthaler	Tonko
McBath	Rice (NY)	Torres (CA)
McCarthy	Rice (SC)	Torres (NY)
McCaul	Rodgers (WA)	Trahan
McClain	Rogers (AL)	Trone
McClintock	Rogers (KY)	Turner
McCollum	Rose	Underwood
McEachin	Ross	Upton
McGovern	Rouzer	Valadao
McHenry	Roy	Van Drew
McKinley	Roybal-Allard	Van Duyn
McNerney	Ruiz	Vargas
Meeks	Ruppersberger	Veasey
Meijer	Rush	Vela
Meng	Rutherford	Velázquez
Meuser	Ryan	Wagner
Mfume	Salazar	Walberg
Miller (IL)	Sánchez	Walorski
Miller (WV)	Sarbanes	Waltz
Miller-Meeks	Scalise	Wasserman
Moolenaar	Scanlon	Schultz
Mooney	Schakowsky	Waters
Moore (AL)	Schiff	Watson Coleman
Moore (UT)	Schneider	Weber (TX)
Moore (WI)	Schrader	Webster (FL)
Morelle	Schrier	Welch
Moulton	Schweikert	Wenstrup
Mrvan	Scott (VA)	Westerman
Mullin	Scott, Austin	Wexton
Murphy (FL)	Scott, David	Wild
Murphy (NC)	Sessions	Williams (GA)
Nadler	Sewell	Williams (TX)
Napolitano	Sherman	Wilson (FL)
Neal	Sherrill	Wilson (SC)
Neguse	Simpson	Wittman
Nehls	Sires	Womack
Newhouse	Slotkin	Yarmuth
Newman	Smith (MO)	Young
Norcross	Smith (NE)	Zeldin
Norman	Smith (NJ)	
O'Halleran	Smith (WA)	

NAYS—3

NOT VOTING—4

Gosar	Massie	Rosendale
Bost	Price (NC)	
Butterfield	Taylor	

□ 1602

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### MEMBERS RECORDED PURSUANT TO HOUSE RESOLUTION 8, 117TH CONGRESS

Aguilar (Correa)	Brown (MD)	Deutch (Rice)
Amodei	(Connolly)	(NY)
(Balderson)	Cárdenas	Doggett (Beyer)
Babin (Norman)	(Gomez)	Doyle, Michael
Barragán	Cherfilus-	F. (Connolly)
(Correa)	McCormick	Evans (Mfume)
Bass (Kelly (IL))	(Beatty)	Fallon (Jackson)
Blumenauer	Cuellar (Correa)	Gohmert
(Beyer)	DelBene (Kuster)	(Boebert)

Gonzalez, Vicente (Correa)	Kelly (PA) (Keller)	Sewell (Kelly) (IL)	Gibbs	Lowenthal	Rutherford	Jordan	Mullin	Steube
Gosar (Greene) (GA)	Kind (Connolly)	Sires (Pallone)	Gimenez	Luetkemeyer	Ryan	Kelly (MS)	Norman	Tenney
Granger (Van Dwyne)	Kirkpatrick (Pallone)	Strickland (Jeffries)	Gohmert	Luria	Salazar	Kustoff	Owens	Tiffany
Green (TN) (Timmons)	Lawson (FL) (Soto)	Suoizzi (Beyer)	Golden	Lynch	Sánchez	LaTurner	Palazzo	Timmons
Grijalva (García) (IL)	Lofgren (Jeffries)	Tiffany (Fitzgerald)	Gomez	Mace	Sarbanes	Lesko	Palmer	Van Dwyne
Johnson (SD) (Armstrong)	Manning (Beyer)	Trone (Connolly)	Gonzalez (OH)	Malinowski	Scalise	Long	Pence	Walorski
Johnson (TX) (Jeffries)	Payne (Pallone)	Underwood (Jeffries)	Gonzalez, Vicente	Malliotakis	Scanlon	Loudermilk	Perry	Weber (TX)
Kahele (Correa)	Pocan (García) (IL)	Van Drew (Reschenthaler)	Gottheimer	Maloney, Carolyn B.	Schiff	Lucas	Pfluger	Webster (FL)
	Raskin (Cicilline)	Veasey (Beyer)	Granger	Manning	Schneider	Mann	Rose	Wenstrup
	Roybal-Allard (Takano)	Wilson (FL) (Cicilline)	Graves (LA)	Matsui	Schrader	Massie	Rosendale	Westerman
	Rush (Jeffries)		Graves (MO)	McBath	Schrier	Mast	Roy	Williams (TX)
			Green (TN)	McCarthy	Scott (VA)	McClintock	Schweikert	Zeldin
			Green, Al (TX)	McCaul	Scott, Austin	Miller (IL)	Sessions	
			Guthrie	McClain	Scott, David	Moore (AL)	Smith (MO)	
			Harder (CA)	McCollum	Sewell			
			Hartzler	McEachin	Sherman			
			Hayes	McGovern	Sherrill			
			Herrera Beutler	McHenry	Simpson			
			Higgins (NY)	McKinley	Sires			
			Hill	McNerney	Slotkin			
			Himes	Meeks	Smith (NE)			
			Hinson	Meijer	Smith (NJ)			
			Hollingsworth	Meng	Smith (WA)			
			Horsford	Meuser	Smucker			
			Houlahan	Mfume	Soto			
			Hoyer	Miller (WV)	Spanberger			
			Hudson	Miller-Meeks	Speier			
			Huffman	Moolenaar	Stansbury			
			Huizenga	Mooney	Stanton			
			Jackson Lee	Moore (UT)	Stauber			
			Jacobs (CA)	Moore (WI)	Steel			
			Jayapal	Morelle	Stefanik			
			Jeffries	Moulton	Steil			
			Johnson (GA)	Mrvan	Stevens			
			Johnson (LA)	Murphy (FL)	Stewart			
			Johnson (OH)	Murphy (NC)	Strickland			
			Johnson (SD)	Nadler	Suoizzi			
			Johnson (TX)	Napolitano	Swalwell			
			Jones	Neal	Takano			
			Joyce (OH)	Neguse	Thompson (CA)			
			Joyce (PA)	Nehls	Thompson (MS)			
			Kahele	Newhouse	Thompson (PA)			
			Kaptur	Newman	Titus			
			Katko	Norcoss	Tlaib			
			Keating	O'Halleran	Tonko			
			Keller	Obernolte	Torres (CA)			
			Kelly (IL)	Ocasio-Cortez	Torres (NY)			
			Kelly (PA)	Omar	Trahan			
			Khanna	Pallone	Trone			
			Kildee	Panetta	Turner			
			Kilmer	Pappas	Underwood			
			Kim (CA)	Pascrell	Upton			
			Kim (NJ)	Payne	Valadao			
			Kind	Perlmutter	Van Drew			
			Kinzinger	Peters	Vargas			
			Kirkpatrick	Phillips	Veasey			
			Krishnamoorthi	Pingree	Vela			
			Kuster	Pocan	Velázquez			
			LaHood	Porter	Wagner			
			LaMalfa	Posey	Walberg			
			Lamb	Pressley	Waltz			
			Lamborn	Quigley	Wasserman			
			Langevin	Raskin	Schultz			
			Larsen (WA)	Reed	Waters			
			Larsen (CT)	Reschenthaler	Watson Coleman			
			Latta	Rice (NY)	Welch			
			Lawrence	Rice (SC)	Wexton			
			Lawson (FL)	Rodgers (WA)	Wild			
			Lee (CA)	Rogers (AL)	Williams (GA)			
			Lee (NV)	Rogers (KY)	Wilson (FL)			
			Leger Fernandez	Ross	Wilson (SC)			
			Letlow	Rouzer	Wittman			
			Levin (CA)	Roybal-Allard	Womack			
			Levin (MI)	Ruiz	Yarmuth			
			Lieu	Ruppersberger	Young			
			Lofgren	Rush				

NOT VOTING—5

□ 1623

Messrs. PALAZZO, TIMMONS, CAWTHORN, GARBARINO, JACOBS of New York, ELLZEY, and OWENS changed their vote from “yea” to “nay.”

So the en bloc amendments were agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

#### MEMBERS RECORDED PURSUANT TO HOUSE RESOLUTION 8, 117TH CONGRESS

Aguilar (Correa)	Gohmert	Payne (Pallone)
Amodei	(Boebert)	Pocan (García)
(Balderson)	Gonzalez,	(IL)
Babin (Norman)	Vicente	Raskin
Barragán	(Correa)	(Cicilline)
(Correa)	Gosar (Greene)	Roybal-Allard
Bass (Kelly (IL))	(GA)	(Takano)
Blumenauer	Granger (Van	Rush (Jeffries)
(Beyer)	Dwyne)	Sewell (Kelly
Brown (MD)	Green (TN)	(IL))
(Connolly)	(Timmons)	Sires (Pallone)
Cárdenas	Grijalva (García	Strickland
(Gomez)	(IL))	(Jeffries)
Cherfilus-	Johnson (SD)	Suoizzi (Beyer)
McCormick	(Armstrong)	Tiffany
(Beatty)	Johnson (TX)	(Fitzgerald)
Cuellar (Correa)	(Jeffries)	Trone (Connolly)
DelBene (Kuster)	Kahele (Correa)	Underwood
Deutch (Rice	Kelly (PA)	(Jeffries)
(NY))	(Keller)	Van Drew
Doggett (Beyer)	Kind (Connolly)	(Reschenthaler)
Doyle, Michael	Lawson (FL)	Veasey (Beyer)
F. (Connolly)	(Soto)	Wilson (FL)
Evans (Mfume)	Lofgren (Jeffries)	(Cicilline)
Fallon (Jackson)	Manning (Beyer)	

#### AMENDMENT NO. 5 OFFERED BY MRS. MILLER-MEEKS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the question on amendment No. 5, printed in part B of House Report 117-253, on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Iowa (Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS).

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 203, nays 223, not voting 6, as follows:

[Roll No. 53]

YEAS—203

Adams	Cárdenas	Dean
Aderholt	Carey	DeFazio
Aguilar	Carl	DeGette
Allred	Carson	DeLauro
Amodei	Carter (LA)	DelBene
Auchincloss	Cartwright	Delgado
Axne	Case	Demings
Bacon	Casten	DeSaulnier
Balderson	Castor (FL)	DesJarlais
Banks	Castro (TX)	Deutch
Barr	Chabot	Diaz-Balart
Barragán	Cherfilus-	Dingell
Bass	McCormick	Doggett
Beatty	Chu	Doyle, Michael
Bera	Cicilline	F.
Bergman	Clark (MA)	Dunn
Beyer	Clarke (NY)	Emmer
Bilirakis	Cleaver	Escobar
Bishop (GA)	Clyburn	Eshoo
Blumenauer	Cohen	Españillat
Blunt Rochester	Cole	Evans
Bonamici	Connolly	Fallon
Bourdeaux	Cooper	Feenstra
Bowman	Correa	Fischbach
Boyle, Brendan	Costa	Fitzpatrick
F.	Courtney	Fletcher
Brady	Craig	Fortenberry
Brown (MD)	Crawford	Foster
Brown (OH)	Crist	Frankel, Lois
Brownley	Crow	Fulcher
Buchanan	Cuellar	Gallego
Bucshon	Curtis	Garamendi
Bush	Davids (KS)	Cammack
Bustos	Davis, Danny K.	García (IL)
Carbajal	Davis, Rodney	García (TX)

Allen	Cawthorn
Armstrong	Cheney
Arrington	Cline
Babin	Cloud
Baird	Clyde
Bentz	Comer
Bice (OK)	Crenshaw
Biggs	Davidson
Bishop (NC)	Donalds
Boebert	Duncan
Brooks	Ellzey
Buck	Estes
Budd	Ferguson
Burchett	Fitzgerald
Burgess	Fleischmann
Calvert	Foxx
Cammack	Franklin, C.
Carter (GA)	Scott
Carter (TX)	Gaetz

NAYS—96

Gallagher	Garbarino
Gonzales, Tony	Good (VA)
Good (TX)	Gooden (TX)
Gosar	Greene (GA)
Griffith	Grothman
Guest	Harris
Harris	Harshbarger
Hern	Herrell
Hice (GA)	Higgins (LA)
Issa	Jackson
Jacobs (NY)	

Aderholt	Barr	Budd
Allen	Bentz	Burchett
Amodei	Bergman	Burgess
Armstrong	Bice (OK)	Calvert
Arrington	Bilirakis	Cammack
Babin	Bishop (NC)	Carey
Bacon	Brooks	Carl
Baird	Buchanan	Carter (GA)
Balderson	Buck	Carter (TX)
Banks	Bucshon	Cawthorn

Chabot  
Cheney  
Cline  
Cloud  
Clyde  
Cole  
Comer  
Crawford  
Crenshaw  
Curtis  
Davidson  
Davis, Rodney  
DesJarlais  
Diaz-Balart  
Donalds  
Duncan  
Dunn  
Ellzey  
Emmer  
Estes  
Fallon  
Feenstra  
Ferguson  
Fischbach  
Fitzgerald  
Fleischmann  
Fortenberry  
Foxy  
Franklin, C.  
Scott  
Fulcher  
Gallagher  
Garbarino  
Garcia (CA)  
Gibbs  
Gimenez  
Gohmert  
Gonzales, Tony  
Gonzalez (OH)  
Good (VA)  
Gooden (TX)  
Gosar  
Granger  
Graves (LA)  
Graves (MO)  
Green (TN)  
Greene (GA)  
Griffith  
Grothman  
Guest  
Guthrie  
Harris  
Harshbarger  
Hartzler  
Hern  
Herrell  
Herrera Beutler  
Hice (GA)

Higgins (LA)  
Hill  
Hinson  
Hollingsworth  
Hudson  
Huizenga  
Issa  
Jackson  
Jacobs (NY)  
Johnson (LA)  
Johnson (OH)  
Johnson (SD)  
Jordan  
Joyce (OH)  
Joyce (PA)  
Katko  
Keller  
Kelly (MS)  
Kelly (PA)  
Kim (CA)  
Kinzinger  
Kustoff  
LaHood  
LaMalfa  
Lamborn  
Latta  
LaTurner  
Lesko  
Letlow  
Long  
Loudermilk  
Luetkemeyer  
Mace  
Malliotakis  
Mann  
Massie  
Mast  
McCarthy  
McCaul  
McClain  
McClintock  
McHenry  
McKinley  
Meijer  
Meuser  
Miller (IL)  
Miller (WV)  
Miller-Meeks  
Moolenaar  
Mooney  
Moore (AL)  
Moore (UT)  
Mullin  
Murphy (NC)  
Nehls  
Newhouse  
Norman

Obernolte  
Owens  
Palazzo  
Palmer  
Pence  
Perry  
Pfluger  
Posey  
Reed  
Reschenthaler  
Rice (SC)  
Rodgers (WA)  
Rogers (AL)  
Rogers (KY)  
Rose  
Rosendale  
Rouzer  
Roy  
Rutherford  
Salazar  
Scalise  
Schweikert  
Scott, Austin  
Sessions  
Simpson  
Smith (MO)  
Smith (NE)  
Smith (NJ)  
Smucker  
Stauber  
Steel  
Stefanik  
Steil  
Steube  
Stewart  
Tenney  
Thompson (PA)  
Tiffany  
Timmons  
Turner  
Upton  
Valadao  
Van Drew  
Van Duyne  
Wagner  
Walberg  
Walorski  
Waltz  
Weber (TX)  
Webster (FL)  
Wenstrup  
Westerman  
Williams (TX)  
Wilson (SC)  
Wittman  
Womack  
Young  
Zeldin

Larson (CT)  
Lawrence  
Lawson (FL)  
Lee (CA)  
Lee (NV)  
Leger Fernandez  
Levin (CA)  
Levin (MI)  
Lieu  
Lofgren  
Lowenthal  
Luria  
Lynch  
Malinowski  
Maloney  
Carolyn B.  
Maloney, Sean  
Manning  
Matsui  
McBath  
McCollum  
McEachin  
McGovern  
McNerney  
Meeks  
Meng  
Mfume  
Moore (WI)  
Morelle  
Moulton  
Mrvan  
Murphy (FL)  
Nadler  
Napolitano  
Neal  
Neguse  
Newman  
Norcross

Bost  
Brady

O'Halleran  
Ocasio-Cortez  
Omar  
Pallone  
Panetta  
Pappas  
Pascrell  
Payne  
Perlmutter  
Peters  
Phillips  
Pingree  
Pocan  
Porter  
Pressley  
Quigley  
Raskin  
Rice (NY)  
Ross  
Roybal-Allard  
Ruiz  
Ruppersberger  
Rush  
Ryan  
Sánchez  
Sarbanes  
Scanlon  
Schakowsky  
Schiff  
Schneider  
Schrader  
Schrier  
Scott (VA)  
Scott, David  
Sewell  
Sherman  
Sherrill  
Sires

NOT VOTING—6

Butterfield  
Price (NC)

□ 1643

Mr. VELA, Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ, and Mr. LARSON of Connecticut changed their vote from “yea” to “nay.”

Messrs. COMER and CARTER of Texas changed their vote from “nay” to “yea.”

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

#### MEMBERS RECORDED PURSUANT TO HOUSE RESOLUTION 8, 117TH CONGRESS

Aguilar (Correa)	Gohmert	Payne (Pallone)
Amodei	(Boebert)	Pocan (Garcia)
(Balderson)	Gonzalez,	(IL)
Babin (Norman)	Vicente	Raskin
Barragán	(Correa)	(Cicilline)
(Correa)	Gosar (Greene)	Roybal-Allard
Bass (Kelly (IL))	(GA)	(Takano)
Blumenauer	Granger (Van	Rush (Jeffries)
(Beyer)	Duyn)	Sewell (Kelly
Brown (MD)	Green (TN)	(IL))
(Connolly)	(Timmons)	Sires (Pallone)
Cárdenas	Grijalva (Garcia	Strickland
(Gomez)	(IL))	(Jeffries)
Cherfilus-	Johnson (SD)	Suozi (Beyer)
McCormick	(Armstrong)	Tiffany
(Beatty)	Johnson (TX)	(Fitzgerald)
Cuellar (Correa)	(Jeffries)	Trone (Connolly)
DelBene (Kuster)	Kahele (Correa)	Underwood
Deutch (Rice	Kelly (PA)	(Jeffries)
(NY))	(Keller)	Van Drew
Doggett (Beyer)	Kind (Connolly)	(Reschenthaler)
Doyle, Michael	Lawson (FL)	Veasey (Beyer)
F. (Connolly)	(Soto)	Wilson (FL)
Evans (Mfume)	Lofgren (Jeffries)	(Cicilline)
Fallon (Jackson)	Manning (Beyer)	

#### AMENDMENT NO. 6 OFFERED BY MS. BROWNLEY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the question on amendment No. 6, printed in part B of House Report 117-253, on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. BROWNLEY).

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 425, nays 0, not voting 7, as follows:

[Roll No. 54]

YEAS—425

Adams	Crawford	Herrera Beutler
Aderholt	Crenshaw	Hice (GA)
Aguilar	Crist	Higgins (LA)
Allen	Crow	Higgins (NY)
Allred	Cuellar	Hill
Amodei	Davids (KS)	Himes
Armstrong	Davis, Danny K.	Hinson
Arrington	Davis, Rodney	Hollingsworth
Auchincloss	Dean	Horsford
Axne	DeFazio	Houlihan
Babin	DeGette	Hoyer
Bacon	DeLauro	Hudson
Baird	DelBene	Huffman
Balderson	Delgado	Huizenga
Banks	Demings	Issa
Barr	DeSaulnier	Jackson
Barragán	DesJarlais	Jackson Lee
Bass	Deutsch	Jacobs (CA)
Beatty	Diaz-Balart	Jacobs (NY)
Bentz	Dingell	Jayapal
Bera	Doggett	Jeffries
Bergman	Donalds	Johnson (GA)
Beyer	Doyle, Michael	Johnson (LA)
Bice (OK)	F.	Johnson (OH)
Biggs	Duncan	Johnson (SD)
Bilirakis	Dunn	Johnson (TX)
Bishop (GA)	Ellzey	Jones
Bishop (NC)	Emmer	Jordan
Blumenauer	Escobar	Joyce (OH)
Blunt Rochester	Eshoo	Joyce (PA)
Boebert	Espallat	Kahele
Bonamici	Estes	Kaptur
Bourdeaux	Evans	Katko
Bowman	Fallon	Keating
Boyle, Brendan	Feenstra	Keller
F.	Ferguson	Kelly (IL)
Brady	Fischbach	Kelly (MS)
Brooks	Fitzgerald	Kelly (PA)
Brown (MD)	Fitzpatrick	Khanna
Brown (OH)	Fleischmann	Kildee
Brownley	Fletcher	Kilmer
Buchanan	Fortenberry	Kim (CA)
Buck	Foster	Kim (NJ)
Bucshon	Fox	Kind
Budd	Frankel, Lois	Kinzinger
Burchett	Franklin, C.	Kirkpatrick
Burgess	Scott	Krishnamoorthi
Bush	Fulcher	Kuster
Bustos	Gaetz	Kustoff
Calvert	Gallagher	LaHood
Cammack	Gallego	LaMalfa
Carbajal	Garamendi	Lamb
Cárdenas	Garbarino	Lamborn
Carey	Garcia (CA)	Langevin
Carl	Garcia (IL)	Larsen (WA)
Carson	Garcia (TX)	Larson (CT)
Carter (GA)	Gibbs	Latta
Carter (LA)	Gimenez	LaTurner
Carter (TX)	Gohmert	Lawrence
Cartwright	Golden	Lawson (FL)
Case	Gomez	Lee (CA)
Casten	Gonzales, Tony	Lee (NV)
Castor (FL)	Gonzalez (OH)	Leger Fernandez
Castro (TX)	Gonzalez,	Lesko
Cawthorn	Vicente	Letlow
Chabot	Good (VA)	Levin (CA)
Cheney	Gooden (TX)	Levin (MI)
Cherfilus-	Gosar	Lieu
McCormick	Gottheimer	Lofgren
Chu	Granger	Long
Cicilline	Graves (LA)	Loudermilk
Clark (MA)	Graves (MO)	Lowenthal
Clarke (NY)	Green (TN)	Lucas
Cleaver	Green, Al (TX)	Luetkemeyer
Cline	Greene (GA)	Luria
Cloud	Griffith	Lynch
Clyburn	Grijalva	Mace
Clyde	Grothman	Malinowski
Cohen	Guest	Malliotakis
Cole	Guthrie	Maloney,
Comer	Harder (CA)	Carolyn B.
Connolly	Harris	Maloney, Sean
Cooper	Harshbarger	Mann
Correa	Hartzler	Manning
Costa	Hayes	Massie
Courtney	Hern	Mast
Craig	Herrell	Matsui

#### NAYS—223

Adams  
Aguilar  
Allred  
Auchincloss  
Axne  
Barragán  
Bass  
Beatty  
Bera  
Beyer  
Biggs  
Bishop (GA)  
Blumenauer  
Blunt Rochester  
Boebert  
Bonamici  
Bourdeaux  
Bowman  
Boyle, Brendan  
F.  
Brown (MD)  
Brown (OH)  
Brownley  
Bush  
Bustos  
Carbajal  
Cárdenas  
Carson  
Carter (LA)  
Cartwright  
Case  
Casten  
Castor (FL)  
Castro (TX)  
Cherfilus-  
McCormick  
Chu  
Cicilline  
Clark (MA)

Clarke (NY)  
Cleaver  
Clyburn  
Golden  
Gomez  
Connolly  
Cooper  
Correa  
Costa  
Courtney  
Craig  
Crist  
Crow  
Cuellar  
Davids (KS)  
Davis, Danny K.  
Dean  
DeFazio  
DeGette  
DeLauro  
DelBene  
Delgado  
Demings  
DeSaulnier  
Deutsch  
Dingell  
Doggett  
Doyle, Michael  
F.  
Escobar  
Eshoo  
Espallat  
Evans  
Fitzpatrick  
Fletcher  
Foster  
Frankel, Lois  
Gaetz  
Gallego  
Garamendi

García (IL)  
García (TX)  
Golden  
Gomez  
Gonzalez,  
Vicente  
Gottheimer  
Green, Al (TX)  
Grijalva  
Harder (CA)  
Hayes  
Higgins (NY)  
Himes  
Horsford  
Houlihan  
Hoyer  
Huffman  
Jackson Lee  
Jacobs (CA)  
Jayapal  
Jeffries  
Johnson (GA)  
Johnson (TX)  
Jones  
Kahele  
Kaptur  
Keating  
Kelly (IL)  
Khanna  
Kildee  
Kilmer  
Kim (NJ)  
Kind  
Kirkpatrick  
Krishnamoorthi  
Kuster  
Lamb  
Langevin  
Larsen (WA)

McBath	Pingree	Stauber
McCarthy	Pocan	Steel
McCaul	Porter	Stefanik
McClain	Posey	Steil
McClintock	Pressley	Steube
McCollum	Quigley	Stevens
McEachin	Raskin	Stewart
McGovern	Reed	Strickland
McHenry	Reschenthaler	Suozi
McKinley	Rice (NY)	Swalwell
McNerney	Rice (SC)	Takano
Meeks	Rodgers (WA)	Tenney
Meijer	Rogers (AL)	Thompson (CA)
Meng	Rogers (KY)	Thompson (MS)
Meuser	Rose	Thompson (PA)
Mfume	Rosendale	Tiffany
Miller (IL)	Ross	Timmons
Miller (WV)	Rouzer	Titus
Miller-Meeks	Roy	Tlaib
Moolenaar	Roybal-Allard	Tonko
Mooney	Ruiz	Torres (CA)
Moore (AL)	Ruppersberger	Torres (NY)
Moore (UT)	Rush	Trahan
Moore (WI)	Rutherford	Trone
Morelle	Ryan	Turner
Moulton	Salazar	Underwood
Mrvan	Sánchez	Upton
Mullin	Sarbanes	Valadao
Murphy (FL)	Scalise	Van Drew
Murphy (NC)	Scanlon	Van Dwyne
Nadler	Schakowsky	Vargas
Napolitano	Schiff	Veasey
Neal	Schneider	Vela
Neguse	Schrader	Velázquez
Nehls	Schrier	Wagner
Newhouse	Schweikert	Walberg
Newman	Scott (VA)	Walorski
Norcross	Scott, Austin	Waltz
Norman	Scott, David	Wasserman
O'Halleran	Sessions	Schultz
Oberholte	Sewell	Watson Coleman
Ocasio-Cortez	Sherman	Weber (TX)
Omar	Sherrill	Webster (FL)
Owens	Simpson	Welch
Palazzo	Sires	Wenstrup
Pallone	Slotkin	Westerman
Palmer	Smith (MO)	Wexton
Panetta	Smith (NE)	Wild
Pappas	Smith (NJ)	Williams (GA)
Pascrell	Smith (WA)	Williams (TX)
Payne	Smucker	Wilson (FL)
Pence	Soto	Wilson (SC)
Perlmutter	Spanberger	Wittman
Perry	Spartz	Womack
Peters	Speier	Yarmuth
Pfleger	Stansbury	Young
Phillips	Stanton	Zeldin

## NOT VOTING—7

Bost	Davidson	Waters
Butterfield	Price (NC)	
Curtis	Taylor	

□ 1700

So the amendment was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I was unavailable to vote in the House. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall No. 51, "yea" on rollcall No. 52, "yea" on rollcall No. 53, and "yea" on rollcall No. 54.

## MEMBERS RECORDED PURSUANT TO HOUSE RESOLUTION 8, 117TH CONGRESS

Aguilar (Correa)	Doggett (Beyer)	Johnson (TX)
Amodei	Doyle, Michael	(Jeffries)
(Balderson)	F. (Connolly)	Kahele (Correa)
Babin (Norman)	Evans (Mfume)	Kelly (PA)
Barragan	Fallon (Jackson)	(Keller)
(Correa)	Gohmert	Kind (Connolly)
Bass (Kelly (IL))	(Boebert)	Lawson (FL)
Blumenauer	Gonzalez,	(Soto)
(Beyer)	Vicente	Loftgren (Jeffries)
Brown (MD)	(Correa)	Manning (Beyer)
(Connolly)	Gosar (Greene	Payne (Pallone)
Cárdenas	(GA))	Pocan (Garcia
(Gomez)	Granger (Van	(IL))
Cherfilus-	Dwyne)	Raskin
McCormick	Green (TN)	(Cicilline)
(Beatty)	(Timmons)	Roybal-Allard
Cuellar (Correa)	Grijalva (García	(Takano)
DelBene (Kuster)	(IL))	Rush (Jeffries)
Deutch (Rice	Johnson (SD)	Sewell (Kelly
(NY))	(Armstrong)	(IL))

Sires (Pallone)	Tiffany	Van Drew
Strickland	(Fitzgerald)	(Reschenthaler)
(Jeffries)	Trone (Connolly)	Veasey (Beyer)
Suozi (Beyer)	Underwood	Wilson (FL)
	(Jeffries)	(Cicilline)

## HONORING OUR PROMISE TO ADDRESS COMPREHENSIVE TOXICS ACT OF 2021

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 1(c) of rule XIX, further consideration of the bill (H.R. 3967) to improve health care and benefits for veterans exposed to toxic substances, and for other purposes, is postponed.

## REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 6886

Mr. LATTI. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to remove the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. WENSTRUP) as a cosponsor of H.R. 6886.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. BOURDEAUX). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

## TIME TO SERVE OUR VETERANS

(Ms. NEWMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. NEWMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to bring attention to our veterans who served in or near the Panama Canal Zone during the Vietnam war.

Hundreds of these veterans came home with major health issues after being exposed to deadly herbicides like Agent Orange and Agent Purple. Yet, to this day, they are not eligible to receive Federal benefits and disability compensation.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to say that we are one step closer to changing that. Today, I was proud to pass my amendment requiring the Department of Defense to study this issue, which is the first step to ensuring that these veterans finally will receive the care and benefits they deserve.

Madam Speaker, these veterans honorably served our Nation. Now, it is our turn to serve them and get this done.

## HARRIET TUBMAN 200TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

(Mr. HARRIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HARRIS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the bicentennial birthday of a true American hero, Harriet Tubman.

Born in Dorchester County, in Maryland's First Congressional District, Harriet Tubman is best known as the conductor of the Underground Railroad. Born a slave, Tubman escaped and risked her own freedom to guide countless other slaves to freedom at great personal risk.

In honor of her life achievement, in the next few weeks, numerous events will be held in and around Dorchester County to celebrate her 200th birthday. The Harriet Tubman State Park and Visitor Center will be hosting discussions with archaeologists and historians, as well as conducting walking tours, live music events, artifact displays, and a film premiere.

As we close out Black History Month and begin Women's History Month, I urge my colleagues and all Americans to join me in honoring the memory of Harriet Tubman. She truly embodied the American spirit. From her thirst for freedom to her courage under fire and her passion for helping her fellow man, she is an example to us all.

Madam Speaker, I am grateful for the opportunity to celebrate her here today on the floor of the people's House.

## HONORING BARBARA CURRAN

(Ms. SHERRILL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. SHERRILL. I rise to recognize the Honorable Barbara Curran, a lifelong public servant from New Jersey who broke many glass ceilings.

Barbara was an accomplished scholar, even earning her law degree in the evenings as a single mom. Entering the world of politics as a woman in the 1970s, she was a force. Barbara was the first woman to serve in all three branches of the New Jersey government—as assemblywoman, as a member of the Governor's cabinet, and as a superior court judge. She was referred to as the "blue elephant" for her commitment to bipartisanship.

Barbara cherished time with family and never missed an opportunity to send encouraging handwritten notes. At times, she was even called off the bench to take a call from her daughter.

I am grateful for the role model Barbara was to me and to so many who saw a path forward in politics through her example, and a glimpse at how to balance being a parent with the demands of public service.

In January, Barbara Curran passed away peacefully. My heart is with her daughter, Katie; her son-in-law, Patrick; and her grandchildren, Duke, Marrin, Lilah, and Moira.

I was honored to know Barbara, and she will be dearly missed.

## STATE OF THE UNION LACKED TANGIBLE PLANS

(Mrs. BICE OF Oklahoma asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. BICE OF Oklahoma. Madam Speaker, I rise today in response to President Biden's State of the Union address.

While I appreciated that Biden emphasized the importance of continuing to support Ukraine, overall, his speech was a lot of talk without tangible plans



to solve the numerous issues that are devastating the Nation.

The President's speech didn't address the root causes of inflation, a crisis that is crushing many American families.

I found it ironic that Biden talked about securing the border when, throughout his entire time in office, he has actively ignored the unprecedented number of illegal crossings, which are due to his open border policies currently in place.

Finally, I am incredibly disappointed that he made no plan to restore American energy independence. We can produce affordable, reliable, and sustainable energy right here at home in States like my home State of Oklahoma.

Frankly, his address focused a lot on rehashing and disguising Build Back Better while lacking concrete solutions to the pressing issues negatively impacting the lives of American people.

#### ECONOMIC PROGRESS

(Ms. NORTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, at last night's State of the Union, President Biden had every reason to cite his extraordinary job creation record, the fastest job growth in U.S. history. After only one year in office, the President's American Rescue Plan was at the center of this achievement. Our economic growth was the fastest in nearly 40 years. As a result, the United States had a faster recovery than every other advanced economy in the G7.

This progress has been made even while the United States is trying to defeat COVID-19. As chair of the Subcommittee on Highways and Transit, I was particularly pleased to hear the President emphasize infrastructure, making goods move faster and cheaper, because this can only add to the historic job creation record he has achieved.

#### CALIFORNIA'S DEVASTATING 2021 FIRE SEASON

(Mr. LAMALFA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAMALFA. Madam Speaker, I would like to point out to the Members here tonight once again that California had a very devastating fire season last year. The whole Western States of America have.

The Dixie fire alone was nearly 1 million acres in my district. Several other fires add up into the six-digit figures.

What we really need to do is have the United States Forest Service identify a fire within the first 24 hours of when a fire occurs and then pounce on it and put the fire out—no more monitoring fire.

Some other colleagues and I will be looking at legislation to put that in

place. We were promised by the Forest Service that would be their policy. We need to enforce that. We need to have that be the dedication they have toward taking care of these Federal lands.

Indeed, there are multi-uses for people, for timber, for preservation. But when they go up in smoke, it just becomes a horrific environmental problem: first, air quality, and then the ash, the silt that is going to wash into our streams and oceans and water storage.

The Forest Service needs to get on the job.

#### SUPPORTING THE PACT ACT

(Ms. KAPTUR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. KAPTUR. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of the PACT Act that Chairman TAKANO and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs brought before us today. I was very pleased to vote for it.

When those who go to serve our country abroad or even here at home come back to civilian life, they often carry with them the injuries of toxic exposure, such as burn pits, and we have a moral obligation for their care.

Madam Speaker, to shift to a different subject, as we watch the slaughter in Ukraine, I would urge the Government of the United States and the President of the United States to mobilize our National Guard Partnership for Peace programs across the various States. Ohio is linked to Serbia and Hungary, and Illinois to Poland.

There are ways for us as a country to use idle aircraft, like C-130 sitting on the ground in this country, where the American people want to donate blankets and bandages in ways of caring for those who are being killed and injured, who are hungry in the Nation of Ukraine. That is an unrealized asset we have.

We could do that overnight if we had the will to do it, the Partnership for Peace, the State Partnership for Peace, which is part of the U.S. Department of Defense under the National Guard Bureau.

Madam Speaker, I ask the President to help us help Ukraine.

□ 1715

#### SECURE THE BORDER

(Mr. ROSE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ROSE. Madam Speaker, I was shocked when President Biden said "we need to secure the border" during his State of the Union address. In his first year in office, over 2 million illegal immigrants were apprehended at the southern border, deportations decreased by 70 percent, and 11,000 migrants were arrested who had previous criminal convictions.

Actions speak louder than words, and when Mr. Biden halted construction of President Trump's border wall and attempted to reverse the remain in Mexico policy, we knew that he didn't want to secure the border. The Biden administration's open border policies put immense strain on law enforcement as they work to combat the fentanyl crisis wreaking havoc on our communities.

In fact, Cumberland County, Tennessee, Sheriff Casey Cox recently took a trip to the southern border to gain a better understanding of the issue after a local 18-year-old woman died of a fentanyl overdose. Much like on my own trips to the border, Sheriff Cox observed how understaffed and ill-prepared we are to face the crisis under the Biden administration.

Madam Speaker, I urge the President to back up his words with action and do what he said: secure the border.

#### AMERICANS CANNOT MAKE ENDS MEET

(Ms. BROWN of Ohio asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. BROWN of Ohio. Madam Speaker, last night President Biden delivered a powerful speech on the state of our Union in this very Chamber. He outlined the historic achievements of the past year and spoke directly to the American people about his vision to continue building a better America.

Despite the progress we have seen, too many of our fellow Americans still cannot make ends meet. Too many families are struggling to afford rising food, childcare, housing, and gas prices. And too many of our neighbors remain locked out of the promise of America.

I stand with President Biden in his call to continue building our economy from the bottom up and the middle out. It is time to lower costs for families by reducing prescription drug prices, expanding access to affordable healthcare, and investing in pre-kindergarten education.

It is time to increase pay by raising the minimum wage and protecting the right to organize. And, yes, it is time to extend the child tax credit.

Last night, I was honored to host Shaneice Ball of Cleveland as my guest for the State of the Union. As a State-tested nursing assistant and a mom of three with one on the way, Shaneice is the epitome of resilience, tenacity, and the American people's ability to persevere through tough times.

#### WE CANNOT FORGET ABOUT OUR SOUTHERN BORDER

(Mr. GROTHMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GROTHMAN. Madam Speaker, with regard to what is going on in Ukraine, I stand with everybody in saying it is an absolutely horrific

thing. If the United States can keep Ukraine and free Ukraine, that is what we should all be hoping and praying for.

We heard a speech last night, in addition to the very relevant numbers, and in addition to the numbers of people dying in Ukraine and the people being injured, we cannot forget that every month in America another 90,000 people cross our southern border. We cannot forget that every month in America 8,000 more people die of drug overdoses. We cannot forget in America, compared to 3 years ago, we deport, every month, approximately 6,000 less people from this country for committing crimes.

Madam Speaker, I realize a lot is going on around the world and it is easy to forget about it, but America should not allow its politicians to forget about this huge sea of people crossing the border and the huge number of people dying of drug overdoses and the broken hearts of their parents, their siblings, and their children.

#### PRESIDENT BIDEN'S ADDRESS TO THE NATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2021, the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from New Mexico?

There was no objection.

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Madam Speaker, yesterday President Biden stood in this very room and addressed a Nation during the State of the Union that was looking to the kind of unity, strength, and commitment that we heard last night. We saw a President who is concerned as our leader for the people. We saw a President who has the empathy for the families and what they have gone through because he, himself, has lived that experience. We saw a leader who is not afraid to stand up to those that threaten all we love.

America sent a clear message to the world that the United States stands steady and steadfast with the people and government of Ukraine. We are united against the unforgivable, unjust, and unprovoked Russian invasion. America is united against Putin, his actions, and what he represents.

The difference is striking. The difference is striking as to what Putin represents with his strong-man mentality, with his autocracy, with his hatred of those he does not know versus what America stands for.

America stands for the embrace of democracy because it is democracy

that looks to maintain that when a people elect their government, that when a people vote for a President, such as we have seen in Ukraine, that that democracy must be honored, and nobody should be allowed to take it away. President Putin is not allowed to take it away.

We saw a President who is building bridges. He is building bridges across our country and the world. He is building actual bridges, the kind of bridges that will connect a school bus to the student who needs to get to school in my district. He is building the kind of bridges that needed to be fixed decades ago that are falling down right before our eyes when he goes to dedicate them.

Those are real bridges that we need in America, that so many Presidents—the President before talked about bridges and infrastructure, but who delivered? President Biden delivered together with this Congress. He delivered together with a bipartisan House vote where we actually thought it was bipartisan because we got 10 Republicans in this House to vote for that Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

But the other kind of bridges he is building are equally important to talk about because those are the bridges of unity. Our former President, he cared about walls. He cared about walls that divide us. He cared about walls that did not do anything that we need. Instead, we now have a President who builds the bridges of unity.

Imagine the kind of work and diplomacy that this President had to do to overcome the threats that the United States would leave NATO, which is what our former President tried to do. Imagine the unity that had to be called out and that had to be cajoled, given that this President was faced with overcoming from our former President's admiration for Putin. Everyone might remember, he has even recently called him a genius. Right?

Instead, we had a President that said no, and that called Putin what he really is, a man who is delusional about what you can accomplish with force. This President, President Biden, has united a world together to repel and to impose sanctions that you wouldn't have imagined.

The idea that we now have Switzerland saying: No, it is not right, we shall not stay neutral because this is so wrong. We must stand up against the darkness. We must stand with the American people who seek light. We will stand against those who seek darkness. We stand against those who want to govern from a place of hatred and fear because we will govern from a place of love for our communities, of love for our families, of love for democracy, and of love for the idea that we must be a world united in the pursuit of peace.

Madam Speaker, I loved the fact that I was able to invite a virtual guest to the State of the Union. I was able to invite Victoria Dominguez as my

hometown hero. My hometown hero comes from Cuba, New Mexico. I had the great fortune of visiting with Victoria Dominguez and the Cuba School District just the Friday before we flew out here.

I can tell you, the love that Victoria Dominguez has for her community and for the children who attend her school is visible in that smile that she shares with you when she talks about them. Cuba is quite special because Cuba is nestled close to the mountains. The people of Cuba cut firewood to warm their home. The people of Cuba are connected with each other.

The people of Cuba don't necessarily have other resources. So when the pandemic hit, the children of Cuba did not have internet, they did not have the ability to remotely learn. The children of Cuba School Districts did not necessarily have the nutrition they needed, the supplies they needed to make it through that dark winter.

But what did Cuba do? Cuba rallied. I love the fact that not only is Victoria Dominguez a hero, but the bus drivers of Cuba, New Mexico, are heroes. They have appeared on the cover of Time magazine because of the work they did. You see them standing in front of their buses because those school buses—working together with Cuba CARES—which our beautiful Victoria Dominguez organized—those school buses took to the students and their families the work that they needed for their schools. They took them the food that they needed to nourish their bodies so that they could also nourish their brains. They took them what they needed.

The thing is that as we are coming out of COVID—thank you, thank you—as we are coming out of COVID and we are learning to handle and to respond to it, as we are able to remove our masks, Cuba CARES isn't going away because we know that caring for your community is not something you do once and walk away from.

I know that Victoria Dominguez is going to continue caring for those beautiful children who attend the Cuba schools. I am so pleased to talk about the work that Victoria Dominguez does because it is the epitome of what we want to support within the Congressional Progressive Caucus because this is the Congressional Progressive Caucus' Special House.

This is when we want to talk about the way in which we can promote and move agendas that focus on our communities. That we can promote and pursue policy that comes from a place of love, that is about creating opportunities, that is about imagining the possibilities, as President Biden said last night. That is what we need to do as a government.

The last thing I want to say about our wonderful hometown hero is that Victoria Dominguez received both her undergraduate and graduate social work degrees from New Mexico Highlands University.

I need to give a shout-out to New Mexico Highlands University because my father received his degrees from New Mexico Highlands University. My mother went to school when she had seven kids and she worked so hard on that typewriter, and it would imprint those letters on her head. We would tease my mother, but she got that degree from New Mexico Highlands University.

New Mexico Highlands University is rated as one of the top—number 19—of those minority-serving institutions that help elevate their students from one socioeconomic rung to another. It is a minority-serving institution that is key in the upward ladder of social mobility.

□ 1730

Now, the Congressional Progressive Caucus had some very key priorities, and I am so pleased to talk about the manner in which we have addressed those priorities.

We believe that it is very important that we strengthen the care economy and that we invest in Medicaid home- and community-based services. We are going to make sure that we do not give up on the image of making sure that childcare is a universal benefit; that we cap out-of-pocket childcare costs so no family pays more than 7 percent of their household income; and that we provide the kind of training and support so that those children are cared for often and most often by women and often and most often by women of color and often by immigrant women; and that these caretakers of our most precious gifts—our children—will receive the pay that they deserve.

We are not giving up on our importance of making investments—bold investments—in housing because we need that housing.

When I was in Cuba, guess what they asked about?

They asked about the importance of getting housing for their teachers at Cuba School. They want teacherages. I went and visited the Presbyterian Medical Services where those doctors, nurses, and clinical workers serving their community were, and I said: What do you need?

They said: We need housing for those so that they can come and work here because we are not close to a city center. When we go and we visit Santa Fe, Taos, Las Vegas, all the different communities in my large district and all of the communities in the districts of our hundred strong Congressional Progressive Caucus members, housing comes up over and over and over again.

So we are going to continue to fight so that we have housing choice vouchers. We are going to continue to fight so that we address the backlog of public housing. We want to make sure that we create affordable housing and that it is available so that we can begin creating the kind of wealth that families need when they are able to acquire a home of their own, because a home is

one of the best ways of both providing that warmth and that care for your family and building wealth for not only yourself but future generations.

I loved it last night when that President of ours focused on what do we need; and, yes, we need to focus on lowering drug prices. We need to use those savings to expand the availability of health to all because who, who should pay the outrageous sums that too many pay, including his special guest last night, for diabetes?

We have said we need to cap it. I am proud that New Mexico has already capped it at \$25. But not all States are as forward thinking as New Mexico, and so I applaud the President for his initiative that we cap it at \$30 a month for insulin because it must not be something that we read in the papers where too many people ration their insulin. And if you ration your insulin, you can die.

If you ration your insulin, your health condition will worsen. You may lose your limbs, you may lose your life. And I have seen those who have lost their limbs, and I have seen those who for the rest of their lives are attached to dialysis because they could not afford to pay for the insulin that they needed to treat their diabetes.

Madam Speaker, we want to make sure that we make bold investments in climate jobs and that those investments go to the most impacted communities. It is not and never has been a choice of jobs or environment. We can have both.

I am very proud of the orphaned well bill that I introduced. It is called the Orphaned Well Cleanup and Jobs Act. In the Senate, Senator LUJÁN has been carrying this mantle, and he introduced the REGROW Act. Out of these two bills we saw \$4.7 billion invested into cleaning up orphaned wells because orphaned wells don't do anything for anybody. What they represent is that companies walked away from their obligation, from their legal obligation, from their obligation to the communities where they dug those wells, where they drilled those wells, and where they pumped oil and gas from those wells. They walked away from their obligation to plug that well and to remediate the land around it once they were done.

Those wells threaten our water table. They threaten our ability to have clean water when we turn on that tap. And very, very sadly, they worsen the climate crisis. What comes out of those wells when they are doing nothing for nobody—nothing for anybody—what comes out of them is the venting of methane, the leakage of methane. You can smell it when you go near those wells, Madam Speaker. I have visited those wells, and they are in places where they should not be. They are next to schools, and that methane is simply leaking and leaking and leaking. It is 28 times or more—more potent—more potent than CO<sub>2</sub>.

So we need to make those kinds of investments where we are both cre-

ating jobs and addressing the climate crisis.

I was so pleased when we heard the President speak last night about immigration reform, because let me tell you, Madam Speaker, there isn't anybody in this Chamber who hasn't benefited from the work of immigrants. There isn't anybody in this Chamber, except SHARICE DAVIDS and we had our wonderful Deb Haaland, who can't say they are not descendants and daughters and granddaughters of immigrants at one time. I am a descendant and a granddaughter of immigrants even though I can trace my lineage back 17 generations. But still they were immigrants then.

They caused good things and bad things which we must recognize. That is our history. There was tension in our history. We have done both good and bad over the years, and we must recognize it.

But in terms of today, looking at what immigrants provide us, those Dreamers that we have are studying to be nurses, they are studying to be doctors, they are studying to be teachers, and they are studying to be physicists, perhaps the engineers that will help us invent what we need to move on to the 22nd century on a planet that still exists and a place we still love. We must provide for those Dreamers. We must make sure that DACA does not expire.

This House did its job. This House passed the DREAM Act and sent it over to the Senate. But immigrants are not just students who will become our next teachers and nurses that we are sorely in need of right now. Immigrants are also those who care for our elderly, who care for our very young, who pick our fruits and vegetables, who clean the chickens and pork and prepare them to come to our supermarkets, and who stock those shelves. So we must also recognize that they are the essential workers who kept our regular lives going.

When we were able to still get food from that supermarket, who was putting their life on the line to provide it to us?

It was immigrants. We must treat them with the respect that they deserve because they have fed all of us. So I was very pleased to listen to the President speak that we must do that.

We are going to be calling upon the President because for some reason we could not get Republicans in the Senate—even though many of them supported these same immigration procedures before—to vote to move those immigration bills forward. So we are faced with this Republican wall that divides.

Why do we have these walls that divide?

Why do we have these walls that stunt progress?

We will continue to meet, ask, and implore the President to lean into those words that he shared with us last night so that we can achieve through executive orders so much.

I look forward to extending the temporary protected status so that it applies not just to the countries from our American continents but also to those who are coming from Ukraine, because we cannot just condemn what Putin has done; we cannot just send the billion dollars that we have already sent to Ukraine for munitions and for assistance; we cannot just do the more work that we have authorized today in this Chamber, but we must also recognize that wars like this, that those who flee dangerous situations, those who flee their country, the place they love, with so little with them, that we have an obligation under international law and under our own law to welcome those who seek asylum in our country. A temporary protected status for the Ukrainians is the right thing to do, and we support that as well.

So I am very pleased that we did, indeed, listen to the President talk about that importance last night because we know—that is the other thing we know—is Americans support—in overwhelming numbers—a majority of Americans support fixing our broken immigration system. They know because they live it daily that immigrants provide for our country and that without immigrants the issues around the supply chains would have been so much worse.

I am also really pleased about the way the President talked about delivering for Tribal communities and about delivering for rural communities. What this President and this Congress have done with regards to investments in rural America, in the small towns and villages that I find throughout my district, in the small towns, villages, and hamlets that we find throughout America where people are working to provide us with the food we eat, with everything we need, with the pasture lands and the grass that our cattle need, with all of the bounty that we receive here in America, that we must also invest in those places.

I was very happy to see that we had the CEO of Intel because in my district we have an Intel plant, and that plant is going to be benefiting from the investment that we have announced and that we passed out of this House with the COMPETES Act, because we are going to make it in America, we are going to invent it in America, and we are going to make sure that it is made and it is made everywhere in America because the priorities that we have in that COMPETES Act are things that are going to be done everywhere in America.

I am so proud of the fact that we do have those huge gains in manufacturing jobs. Other Presidents keep talking about having gains in manufacturing jobs, but it is under this President—and that in 1 year—we had more than half a million jobs created, 600,000-plus jobs. In New Mexico, we had 3,600 manufacturing jobs created.

Now, our problem is we need to make sure everybody knows about that. We

need to make sure that these voices about the possibilities and how we are creating opportunity and how we are delivering for those communities where we serve gets out there because sometimes all we listen to is those who vilify, is those who complain, and those who just want to tear everything down and don't really have any good solutions.

What we are doing in this House and what we are passing out of this House are solutions. We know, and we heard the President speak eloquently last night, about the difficulties of inflation. But we also heard the President speak about how we address inflation; how we address inflation without penalizing workers; how we pay workers more and make sure that costs come down. That is what the infrastructure bill will do. That is what the COMPETES bill will do. And that is what we do when we operate and we pass policies that focus on lifting up our communities, not dividing our communities.

Madam Speaker, I am also so pleased at the President's words that he said last night when he said: When we invest in our workers, when we build the economy from the bottom up and the middle out, we can build a better America.

Madam Speaker, unions are critical to establishing the good jobs with a fair pay and safe working conditions that make that possibility of building a better America from the bottom up and the middle out.

That is a key distinction of what we have done in this Congress in the 14 months that I have been so lucky to serve. In those 14 months, we have focused and we have invested in us. We have been with the people because the people have moved us along, and they have told us what we need because we have gone and visited and we have listened.

□ 1745

I was trained as a rebellious lawyer. Why do I say that? People say, what does a rebellious lawyer do? I was very lucky. I got trained as a rebellious lawyer at Stanford Law School. What the most important and powerful thing a rebellious lawyer can do is listen.

What you saw last night was a President responding to what America has shared with us about what they need, about what our families need, what our communities need. That is what we have done in these last 14 months.

We did not give away a whole bunch of money to the rich and the big corporations because they don't need it. They are recognizing incredible profits in the last 14 months, and they are passing on higher costs. So, the people who are carrying the burden of those profits are our families, our working families.

But what we have done is, instead of giving away money to those who didn't need it, we have invested in our communities. We have invested in our com-

munities, in the American Rescue Plan, by giving people the money they needed to make it through those harsh, dark days.

Do we remember what it was like in 2020? It was dark. It was ugly. It was scary. We didn't know if we were going to come out of it. People thought they were going to be losing their homes.

How were they going to pay their rent? We helped them out.

The number of small businesses that we have saved is amazing.

Then not only did we save those businesses, but the other thing that we have done in the last 14 months is we have had record growth of new businesses starting.

Those are the kinds of things that we need to celebrate even as we put our task to the metal, even as we work really hard to make sure that we address the new issues that we face because our work is never done. Our work is never done.

I have studied liberation theology in college and in graduate school. We talked about what it means to try to honor the creator, to honor what we are to do. It was about the fact that we need to try to create here on Earth the kingdom of God because it is not enough to say that you need to wait for it.

Those of us who believe in whatever our beliefs are, we each need to move to say how we work today and every day to make the lives of those in our community better, to make sure that we welcome the stranger, because as the Scripture says, we were once strangers, too.

To me, that is what we should do when we talk about immigration. We need to honor the words of love that are in those Scriptures.

Today, as we celebrate Ash Wednesday, we must remember that we have a job to do here while we are on this Earth, and that is to make this place better for those who are less fortunate, for those who are on the bottom up and the middle out, for all of those.

That is our job. We have a job for this beautiful place we call home, this beautiful planet we call home.

As the Pope has pointed out, we have an obligation to protect this beautiful creation we have against climate change, which is part and parcel of, as the Pope has noted, greed.

We must move away from being greedy and being mean and move to a place where our policies are made from a place of love, where we are waking up and fighting for our workers. We are allowing them to unionize because it is through unionization that this country has always improved the conditions of our communities.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

#### REAL STATE OF THE UNION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2021, the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. JOHNSON) is recognized for

60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Louisiana?

There was no objection.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, President Biden's address to the Nation last night was a missed opportunity. Our country is mired in a historic number of crises of the President and his party's own making at home, at our border, and abroad.

The rhetoric in the President's speech simply did not match his failing record. No amount of spin can change what every single American can see plainly and feel so personally.

Madam Speaker, in simple summary, our Union is in a state of crisis. Hard-working American families are being threatened by skyrocketing prices and empty store shelves; by alarming increases in crime; by our wide-open borders and illegal immigration; by record overdose deaths; by delayed tax returns and government services; and, of course, not the least of which is the projection of weakness on America's part on the world stage.

Since the magnitude of these problems obviously has not convinced the President and his Democrat allies in Congress to reverse course, I am not sure anything will.

But the State of the Union address is supposed to be an annual opportunity for the American President to take stock, to level with the American people, to acknowledge what has worked and what has not.

Republicans urged President Biden to take advantage of that opportunity last night to chart a new direction, to speak honestly, to accept responsibility for the declining state of our country and pledge to do better.

President Biden certainly would not have been the first American President to seek a reset—far from it. Presidential resets are common, and they are necessary. But this President didn't do that.

What did we get instead? Another typical Biden speech. We got another series of warmed-over Democrat talking points taped together and presented to the American people as if it weren't those same policies that got us into the messes that we are in.

Madam Speaker, this evening, my Republican colleagues and I will provide a further response to the State of the Union that was delivered here just last night.

But first, Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. RODGERS), my friend and colleague, for her remarks and for a prayer that is being shared tonight around the world.

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

We are all inspired by the people of Ukraine and the leadership of President Zelensky and Mayor Klitschko.

Today, Christian Ukrainians asked for Christians around the world to join in praying, specifically, Psalm 31. So please join me.

O Lord, we come to You for protection. Don't let us be disgraced. Save us, for You do what is right.

Turn Your ear to listen to us. Rescue us. Be our rock, our protection, our fortress, where we will be safe.

For the honor of Your name, lead us out of this danger. Pull us from the traps of our enemies, for we find protection in You alone.

We entrust our spirit into Your hand. Rescue us, Lord, for You are a faithful God.

We will be glad and rejoice in Your unfailing love. You have seen our troubles and You care about the anguish of our souls.

Have mercy on us, Lord, for we are in distress. Tears blur our eyes. Our body and soul are withering away. We are dying from grief.

We are scorned by our enemies, despised by their neighbors. Even our friends are afraid to come near. When they see us in the streets, they will run the other way.

We are being ignored as if we were dead, as if we were a broken pot.

We have heard the many rumors, and they are surrounded by terror. Their enemies conspire, plotting to take our lives.

But we are trusting You, O Lord, saying You are our God. Our future is in Your hands. Rescue us from those who hunt us down relentlessly.

Let Your favor shine on Your servants. In Your unfailing love, rescue. Don't let us be disgraced, O Lord, for we call out to You for help. Let the wicked be disgraced. Let them lie in silence in the grave.

Silence their lying lips, those proud and arrogant lips that accuse the godly.

How great is the goodness You have stored up for those who fear You. You lavish it on those who come to You for protection, blessing them before the watching world.

You hide us in the shelter of Your presence, safe from those who conspire against them. You shelter us in Your presence, far from accusing tongues.

Praise the Lord, for He has shown us the wonders of His unfailing love. He has kept us safe when my city was under attack. In panic, we cried out, "We are cut off from the Lord," but You heard our cry for mercy and answered our call for help.

Love the Lord, all you godly ones, for the Lord protects those who are loyal to Him, but He harshly punishes the arrogant.

So be strong and courageous, all you who put your hope in the Lord.

The word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

Amen.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. The words of the psalmist resonate today as much as they did when they were written so many years ago, and our God is faithful. I thank the gentlewoman for putting that in perspective tonight.

Madam Speaker, I am happy to yield next to the gentleman from California (Mr. LAMALFA).

Mr. LAMALFA. Madam Speaker, I rise during this Special Order to offer thoughts on the real State of the Union.

Last night, the President addressed the Nation and attempted to rewrite the history of his first 14 months in office. The speech was short on solutions to our everyday challenges: record inflation, skyrocketing price of gas, and supply chain disruptions that are affecting everything from food to consumer goods.

This administration owns this energy crisis, which is a direct result of its crippling domestic production. When we don't produce our own energy, it makes us more vulnerable to global market fluctuations such as those caused by the Russian aggressions at Ukraine.

The Biden administration continues to ignore the national emergency at our southern border with unprecedented illegal immigration, millions of apprehensions, and limited deportations. It is a serious situation that continues to threaten our national security.

Let's focus for a moment here on U.S. energy. America's been feeling the ripple of skyrocketing energy prices. The average gallon of gas in my home State of California is up 70 percent from this time last year, and heating our homes is over 30 percent more expensive than winter last year.

Economic sanctions on Russia and the halting of the Nord Stream pipeline are sure to help increase the costs of energy, but they are necessary in order for to us to have independence. This reality will be a wake-up call for the Biden administration to reverse their current course and understand that American-produced energy is the best path forward.

After the President announced further sanctions on Russia due to the unprovoked attack on Ukraine, he promised to supply energy to our European allies that depend on Russian natural gas.

Since his first day in office, he has repeatedly stifled U.S. gas and oil production, increasing our dependence on all things Russian oil.

I am an adamant supporter of domestic oil and gas production, including building new pipelines. Right under our feet lies the largest untapped oil supply in the world, more than enough to drive down costs for American consumers and export liquefied natural gas to our European allies, removing our adversaries like Russia from their supply chain.

In last night's State of the Union, the President called to make Russia suffer

economic consequences for their unprovoked attack. He glossed over that he has repeatedly stifled U.S. energy production, halting the Keystone pipeline and suffocating domestic oil and gas leases.

Unfortunately, he did the opposite. Just this week, he announced he is once again halting all new leases for drilling on our vast Federal lands, which we know how to do well and ecologically soundly. His solution? Import more gas from other adversaries such as China and the Middle East.

Our Nation imports 7 percent of our oil from Russia. Although that may seem like not much, if they shut it off when we are not ready for it, that will cause a big ripple.

We can't just flip a switch and turn on our domestic energy supply. It will take time to do it. We know what we need to do. We need to get at it, to start now.

The American people are being crushed under the weight of these economic consequences from failed policies. We know what we need to do. Let's get after it.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, energy policy is national security policy. Energy security is national security. We know that acutely now.

Madam Speaker, I am delighted to yield next to the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. McCLAIN).

Mrs. McCLAIN. Madam Speaker, the state of our Union is atrocious. There are crises everywhere we look: record-high inflation; record-high illegal border crossings; a supply chain crisis that has stalled our economy; soaring energy prices; a devastating and deadly withdrawal from Afghanistan; an emboldened Russia trying to overthrow a sovereign country and a democratic ally, Ukraine. This is what a full year of complete Democratic control and failure has brought the American people.

The President is completely backward. The policies he and his congressional Democrat allies have pushed us into haven't gotten us out of these crises. They have actually pushed us into these crises under his first, short 1-year term in office.

The speech we saw last night was completely detached from reality.

□ 1800

What the American people are hearing from the Democrats is not what they are seeing, and it is not what they are experiencing. They can no longer afford to suffer these crises brought on by incompetent, arrogant, and out-of-touch leaders.

Sadly, the speech last night indicates that this administration plans to double down on their nonsense and spread lies and misinformation to the American people. All the American people want is truth, transparency, and consistency instead of manufacturing accomplishments to talk about at the State of the Union, like the convenient

overnight change in the science, or shall I say, political science as a wind must have blown in from the Senate and, miraculously, COVID doesn't exist anymore.

President Biden needs to own up to all of the problems he has created and actually come up with some real solutions to get our country back on track. There is still time to do that.

If he is unable to do that, I implore him, please. Pick up the phone. Call me. I am happy to help.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I thank my friend. Very well said.

Madam Speaker, I am happy now to yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLER), who announced this week that he will not be seeking reelection, and he will be sorely missed because he is a gentleman and a great legislator.

Mr. KELLER. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Louisiana.

Madam Speaker, President Biden had an opportunity during the State of the Union address to communicate to the American people what his administration has learned from its policy failures of the past year and lay out a plan to correct course. Unfortunately, that didn't happen.

I was not surprised that the President used this address as a political tool to double down on his assault on American energy, mandates, and Big Government spending. These policy decisions have emboldened our adversaries and led to record high inflation, business losing workers, rising crime across the country, and a wide open southern border.

If President Biden really believed that doing the same thing will solve any of the crises his administration created, he is either totally out of touch or ignoring the facts. Either way, the President took the easy way out. What is easy is not always right.

Be assured, Republicans will not shy away from our duty to always put America first, to rebuild our economic engine, restore individual liberty, and renew the American Dream.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I thank my friend. I appreciate him very much.

Madam Speaker, I am happy to yield to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON), who has been a mentor to me and so many others in Congress.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, I thank Mr. MIKE JOHNSON for his leadership and courage to present the truth tonight.

Madam Speaker, last Friday, I was grateful as the ranking member of the U.S. delegation to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe to address the Parliamentary Assembly in Vienna, Austria. Our delegation was ably led by co-chair STEVE COHEN.

The bipartisan United States delegation of Democrats and Republicans, being transatlantic with our valued European and Indo-Pacific allies have been unintentionally united about Putin's war of mass murder in

Ukraine, violating the principles of the Helsinki Final Act.

This emphasizes the devastating human cost of Putin's war against the families of Ukraine, isolating Russia and Belarus from the modern world.

This is Putin's war, as correctly identified by Der Spiegel, the German news magazine. It is not a war in Ukraine. It is not Russia's war. This is clearly to be forever condemned as Putin's war. The responsibility of an insane czar who is trying to build his power based on oil, money, and power, betraying young Russians to death.

OSCE monitors have impartially relayed the tragic reality of this conflict every day under often difficult and dangerous conditions. The Putin government and its proxies must restore the monitors' ability to fulfill their mandate.

I am personally grateful to have visited Russia a number of times where I was so impressed by the talented citizens who today who are being betrayed by Putin in his obsession for oil, money, and power.

Two months ago, I visited Kyiv, and it is horrifying to know of the attacks.

The pictures that we see here—they have been sent worldwide—this is the road to the airport. I was so impressed when I was there in December to see the four, six, eight, now ten lanes of boulevards filled with cars, a very modern society with high rise buildings that could be anywhere in America, could be anywhere in the world, in the modern world.

Now, sadly, we see that the cars are congested there and blocked. You have families. They have their pets with them. They have all the property that they could possibly carry. They have children. They have infants. They have elderly and sick persons and are trying to flee the rocket attacks solely the responsibility of Putin.

Sadly, in Belarus, dictator Lukashenko has become a puppet of Putin to subject Belarusians to autocracy, facilitating Putin's illegal war on the people of Ukraine.

It is inspiring that the legal president of Belarus, Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, would have her first loyalty to the people of Belarus, not to the war criminal, Putin.

In conclusion, God bless Ukraine. God save Ukraine. Long live President Volodymyr Zelensky. God bless America.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Thank you, Mr. WILSON, for all you do, and your expertise in foreign affairs is a great blessing to all of us.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROSE).

Mr. ROSE. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Louisiana for yielding me time this evening.

Madam Speaker, today, I rise to remind President Biden that the State of the Union is in crisis, more so than at any time in my lifetime.

After sitting in the House Chamber last night listening to the President speak, I couldn't help but think about the people of Tennessee that are struggling to make ends meet.

They are struggling due to skyrocketing inflation that has been fueled by President Biden and congressional Democrats' insatiable desire to recklessly spend trillions of dollars by



borrowing massive amounts of money from China and elsewhere, and highly mortgaging our children's and grandchildren's and their children that follow after them, the future for these generations. It is gutless, and it is wrong.

Madam Speaker, the State of the Union is not strong. In fact, under only 1 year of President Biden's leadership, migrant encounters at our southern border have increased 96 percent. More police officers were killed than in any year since 1995. The price of gasoline has increased 33 percent. The fentanyl that comes across our southern border has become the leading cause of death among people aged 18 to 45, with an American dying every 5 minutes and 15 seconds.

Afghanistan has been surrendered back to the Taliban, leaving behind hundreds of Afghans who were aligned with us during that long struggle, along with billions of taxpayer dollars in modern American weaponry. Now, another American ally is under attack by out-of-control Russian dictator Vladimir Putin.

It is time to wake up and recognize that Biden's administration and Congressional Democrats' policies are failing the American people. In fact, those policies have begun to do real damage to us at an ever-increasing pace.

The people of my State, Tennessee, see right through this charade and implore the President to act now before it is too late and reverse his policies to match the rhetoric that we heard in the State of the Union address.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, that was so well said. We are going to stay in the State of Tennessee.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. BURCHETT), who is from that same area.

Mr. BURCHETT. Madam Speaker, I thank Mr. JOHNSON for his leadership.

Madam Speaker, let me start off by offering my prayers to Ukraine, its people, and its leaders. I have asked my family to do that. Every night when we say our prayers, we pray for the people of Ukraine and their safety and the miracle of Biblical proportions that needs to occur in that country. It has happened before, and it can happen again. All of us hope that their country finds peace. We want to see this conflict end, Madam Speaker.

Innocent Ukrainians are caught in the middle of Vladimir Putin's unprovoked war against their country. These civilians are not at all responsible for the situation they find themselves in, yet they are the ones who are always paying the price.

Homes are destroyed. Food and water are scarce. Medical supplies are in short supply. Many institutions necessary for a stable society are under attack. On top of it all, the Ukrainians are living under the constant threat of Putin dropping a vacuum bomb or something worse. Some reports indi-

cate that thermobaric bombs have been introduced to the theater, a whole new kind of hell that we are not used to in this country.

Discussions are now taking place about the United States supporting the Ukrainians with humanitarian aid. The question remains, how will we pay for this important matter? Congress could save a whole lot of money, Madam Speaker, if we would seize Russian-held assets and use them to pay for humanitarian aid to Ukraine. Using a creative funding mechanism like this ensures that we are responsible stewards of our constituents' tax dollars, especially given the challenges they face here at home.

Since 2015, American taxpayers have spent nearly \$3 billion on humanitarian aid to Ukraine. What is wrong with having those responsible for the current humanitarian crisis pay for it, Madam Speaker? Vladimir Putin's invasion sparked this crisis. It makes sense that Russia should pay for the destruction and suffering it is causing these poor, innocent Ukrainians.

I appreciate Mr. JOHNSON's truculent use of this apparatus, and I do appreciate his lackluster approach.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CLYDE).

Mr. CLYDE. Madam Speaker, I appreciate Mr. JOHNSON's leadership in this Special Order.

Last night, President Biden had an opportunity to pivot his failing administration by using the State of the Union to present a new plan that would actually help the American people and address the multitude of crises that he created by his policies.

Instead, President Biden wasted his State of the Union speech by doubling down on his failed agenda and flat-out lying to the American people.

When I heard his tough talk on sanctioning Russia and his vow to buy American, I had hope that maybe this would include energy, American oil and gas. But no, his administration continues to double down on Green New Deal priorities and promote the purchase of oil and gas from other countries.

Why would he do that? Why would he encourage the United States to continue to buy over 635,000 barrels a day from Russia alone? Just look at the spot price of oil, \$114 per barrel today, which means we are sending Vladimir Putin over \$72.5 million every day to fund his war machine against Ukraine. Every dollar we spend on foreign energy weakens domestic energy production.

When he spoke about inflation, Biden's only so-called solution to combat 40-year high prices and hyperinflation was to tell businesses to lower costs. That was it.

Despite promising that he will secure the southern border, Biden's severely misguided immigration policies have led to over 2.1 million illegal encounters at our border in his first year

alone, not to mention record high levels of dangerous drugs like fentanyl flooding into our communities.

Just today, his own acting assistant secretary of Border Security and Immigration Policy at DHS admitted in our Homeland Security Committee meeting that they are actively working to fight against and overturn the lower-court-mandated remain in Mexico policy at the Supreme Court level.

Last night, the President conveniently claimed victory over COVID and urged Americans to stop looking at COVID as a partisan dividing line. But don't forget, Biden has routinely enforced medical tyranny and used the pandemic as a weapon to sow division. Throughout his Presidency, Biden has said that unvaccinated Americans are destroying our economy, killing our people, and are the root of our country's problems. No, Mr. President, that is simply not right.

But it was right to say last night that the answer is not to defund the police. So why the change in message? For years, Democrats have dangerously called for defunding our brave men and women in law enforcement. Even candidate Biden said funding should be redirected away from our police.

□ 1815

Meanwhile, there was no mention of the Biden administration's abysmal failure in Afghanistan that resulted in 13 fallen heroes, handed billions of dollars worth of military equipment to the Taliban, and abandoned Americans behind enemy lines.

After a year of his failed leadership, the American people know good and well that Biden's speech was nothing but lip service. Actions speak louder than words, Mr. President. Americans are desperately waiting for—and deserve—a leader who will act on their behalf to fix the crises facing our Nation. We are still waiting.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Thank you, my friend. Well said. Madam Speaker, I am happy to yield next to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON), the Republican leader of our House Agriculture Committee.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. I thank the gentleman for his leadership in this Special Order hour and for yielding.

Madam Speaker, I rise today during this Special Order to offer thoughts on the real state of our Union. Last night, President Biden addressed the Nation and attempted to rewrite the history of his first year in office.

His speech included a lot of Washington-speak and was short on solutions to our everyday challenges: Record-high inflation, the skyrocketing cost of gas, and supply chain disruptions affecting everything from food to consumer goods.

President Biden owns this energy crisis, which is the direct result of his administration crippling domestic production: Ending the issuing of permits, the production on Federal lands, the

stopping of pipelines, the list goes on and on and on.

When we don't produce our own energy, it makes us more vulnerable to global market fluctuations such as those caused by Russian aggressions in Ukraine. You heard my good friend talk about how America under President Biden is buying over half a million barrels of oil a day. In some small part or large part, America is funding, through that, the Russian aggression into Ukraine.

President Biden continues to ignore the national emergency at our southern border. I was just there last week, and it was incredible. We have unprecedented illegal migration, we have millions of apprehensions and limited deportations. This is a serious situation that continues to threaten our national security.

Madam Speaker, actions speak louder than words, and no amount of grandstanding is going to change the fact that the American people have a starkly different view from the President on the direction of our country.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Thank you, my friend, for your leadership. That was well said. As we say over and over and over, energy security is national security, and it is unconscionable that we are funding Putin's aggression in Ukraine.

Madam Speaker, I am happy to yield next to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. MILLER), my dear friend.

Mrs. MILLER of Illinois. Madam Speaker, House Democrats who attacked unmasked and unvaccinated Americans as super-spreaders and said they should be fired from their jobs suddenly decided to lift the mask mandate and crowd together last night, hugging and kissing each other in a packed room right before the State of the Union to benefit President Biden's political optics.

COVID restrictions weren't lifted because they were destroying children's lives or killing small businesses. The restrictions ended because a politician's poll numbers got too low, and he needed a political reset. The American people are disgusted by this political double standard. They are never going to forget it.

But we are not surprised. Every decision the Biden administration makes has gone against the needs and the will of the American people.

Americans want secure borders and police protection. What does the left do? Open our borders, facilitate an invasion, and defund and demoralize our police.

Americans want energy independence and affordable gas. What does the left do? They dismantle our domestic energy industry and are forcing Americans to buy Chinese solar panels and batteries.

The left may be woke, but Americans are awake. The state of the Union is ready for a change.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Well said. The hypocrisy was on display last night. It is just absurd.

Madam Speaker, I am happy to yield next to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOOD).

Mr. GOOD of Virginia. Madam Speaker, last night's speech should have been the shortest State of the Union Address in history. It is easy for everyone to see the state of the Union is much worse after one year under the Biden Presidency.

This President, in order to keep energy independence, which is a national security issue and an economic security issue, all he had to do was nothing. If he would have just stayed in his basement and we paid him to stay home, the country would be so much better off today with the prices we are paying at the pump, with the security of our Nation.

There is nothing that impacts middle-income, lower-income, fixed-income Americans than what we are paying at the pump. And now we are at risk of it going from \$4 a gallon to \$7 a gallon because of this President, and he has the travesty to not release American energy in the face of Russian aggression in Ukraine.

This President needs to allow all the drilling to take place in the United States, for us to unleash our resources and bankrupt the Putin regime so he cannot finance the invasion into Ukraine. But, no, what is happening? We are buying some 75,000 gallons of Russian oil a day at the cost of \$100 a barrel, enriching Putin's regime to the cost of \$75 million per day.

But it is worse than that. What did this President have to do to keep a secure border? All he had to do was nothing. If he had stayed home after January 20, 2021, Americans would still be largely safe at the border because illegal immigration had been eradicated under the previous administration.

But what did he do? He forced the cessation of the border wall, and he does not permit the border agents, the Border Patrol to do their job. Meanwhile, 2.2 million illegal aliens came across our border last year, and have been distributed into the interior of our country, flown at taxpayer expense all over the country in the dark of night from 160 countries.

We don't know what they are doing while they are here, and this President has not just allowed it to happen; he has facilitated it to happen. As a matter of fact, last night he had the gall to say, hey, we want to secure the border, when his policies have done just the opposite and continue to do just the opposite.

Article IV, Section 4 of the Constitution says it is the responsibility of the President to protect the States from invasion, and he is doing just the very opposite willfully, purposefully, intentionally. That is why so many of us have signed onto impeachment articles against this President, just because of what he has done on the border. Let's pretend he had done everything else well—use your imagination—in his first year in the White House. Just be-

cause of what he is doing to the American people at the border, and he has the gall in the speech last night to lie to the American people and say that he wants to secure the border. It should have been the shortest speech ever because to get up there and lie to the American people about the policies that he is implementing that are harming this country, it is a travesty. Thank you, Chairman JOHNSON.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. GOOD said it so well, and that passion is felt all around this country. I hear it from my constituents. I know Mr. GOOD does as well. All of us do. People couldn't even tune in last night. Our constituents are writing to us saying they couldn't even watch it because it was nauseating how untrue it was. Here we are.

Madam Speaker, I yield next to the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MANN).

Mr. MANN. Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague and friend from Louisiana for his leadership and for hosting this here tonight.

Less than 24 hours ago, the President delivered the State of the Union Address in this very Chamber. I would like to respond on behalf of the Big First District of Kansas.

Last night, Americans hoped to hear our Commander in Chief address the many crises facing our country and explain his plans for fixing them; a reasonable request. Instead, we heard a monologue of half-truths and empty promises. This administration has failed on the world stage, creating one foreign policy disaster after another, and the repercussions are posing threats to America's food supply, energy security, and our freedom.

On the home front, this administration has created record inflation, which is destroying livelihoods and killing small businesses across the country and in my district. Drugs and crime are destroying American communities and families, and we have an open southern border where drugs and human trafficking run rampant. The supply chain is still in disarray. Our country's debt is at an all-time high, almost \$30 trillion, and the President has halted our march toward energy independence by killing the Keystone XL pipeline. The Biden administration has made a disaster in his handling of the issues at home.

Abroad, our country has an egregious trade deficit with China, a country that ripped off American farmers to the tune of \$16 billion in the phase one trade deal, and this administration has done nothing to hold them accountable.

The President was getting lots of applause last night for talking a big game about supporting Ukraine, but we have done nothing meaningful so far as in response to the humanitarian crisis Vladimir Putin has created there. His financial sanctions won't prevent China from bailing out Russia financially, and President Biden won't stop buying half a million barrels of oil a

day from Putin because, again, President Biden killed the Keystone XL pipeline.

Furthermore, the President clearly isn't worried about the food implications of Russia taking over Ukraine, which is the breadbasket of Europe, by the way, and the third largest grain exporter in the world, because he still hasn't even appointed a USDA under secretary of foreign trade and agriculture. In 13½ months he hasn't even nominated one.

Americans are a resilient people. We have proven that over the past 2 years. I would argue that Kansans are among the most resilient of all. We have made it through worse times than these. But I am standing here today to say enough is enough. We need to get this country back on track, and to do that we need a President who actually leads.

Last night, I hoped that the President would tell us about how he plans to hold Russia accountable for its inhumane invasion of Ukraine, stop inflation, fix the supply chain, secure our southern border, and stand up for American farmers and ranchers who feed, fuel, and clothe the world. But he did not. Instead I heard an out-of-touch stump speech from a politician who wanted me to believe that everything is going to be just fine as long as he is in the White House.

I pray for the President, and I want him to be successful, but in order for that to happen, he must lead.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Very well said, my friend. Thank you for being here.

Madam Speaker, I yield to another colleague now, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GROTHMAN).

Mr. GROTHMAN. Madam Speaker, I would like to comment a little bit on the speech last night and some of the issues that have been ignored and should be addressed and some of the issues that were given such short shrift it was almost comical.

The first issue I would like to address is inflation. Next time I should get my own billboard here. But if you look at M2, which is one measure of the monetary supply, in the 1970s—and I am old enough to remember the 1970s when inflation was really a horrible thing and something that we were never supposed to repeat—M2 was going up at a rate of about 7 percent year over year. We now are up about 37 percent year over year.

I mean, if you look at a graph, it is shocking the degree to which the Federal Reserve is just flooding money into our system. Of course, a major reason why they have had to do this is wildly excessive spending, because if you have excessive spending and foreign governments do not want to buy your debt, and who would want to buy your debt, you wind up with no alternative but to degrade the value of the dollar.

I thought it was particularly amazing that the President said or told businesses that you have to “lower your costs,” meaning that we shouldn't

reduce wages, which is fine, but like it is an easy thing to lower your costs. I wonder, has President Biden ever actually talked to the businesses who are raising their prices?

The first thing I hear about is the metals, the aluminum, the different kinds of steel that are up 300, 400, 500 percent. When the market, the cost of these things go up to that degree, and you are a businessman, what in the world are you supposed to do?

The cost of transportation is going up, and the amount we pay truckers, which is a tremendously good occupation, has gone up. Sometimes you can't even get trucks. And what has President Biden done? He imposes a vaccine mandate on truckers, which further reduces the supply of an occupation that is already in demand, thereby guaranteeing the cost is going to continue to go up even more.

I strongly encourage President Biden to have some of his staff run around Washington, D.C., or maybe run around and talk to some of the factory owners in this country and ask them or advise them what they are supposed to do to “lower their costs.” Most of them, because we have a shortage of people working, are already probably exceeding last year's output in product. Despite the fact that they are doing that, and so, therefore, they are getting more per hour worked, but they can't find any new ways to reduce costs.

□ 1830

But, again, I hope President Biden sends some of his cabinet members around the country and either advises them on how it is going to be easy to lower your costs or hears from them how impossible it is for them to lower their costs.

By the way, every single manufacturer I have talked to in the last 2 months—and I bet I have talked to 15, 20—every one of them thinks inflation is going to get worse. When I talk to farmers who use a variety of fertilizers, whatever, that goes into their product, they see the costs going through the roof. And every single farmer I talk to thinks inflation is going to get worse.

So I strongly encourage the Biden administration to have some people get out there among the hoi polloi and find out what is really going on with regard to inflation.

Next, President Biden talked about the police. And maybe President Biden doesn't realize what the problem he and his allies have created by going after the police. In Milwaukee, the city just to the south of my district, there was a dramatic increase to an all-time record high number of murders in 2020, something that you never thought you would see again, and it was exceeded again in 2021.

Why is that happening? It is because President Biden and his allies have adopted an antipolice rhetoric, in particular implying an amount of racism out there, and they are pushing a bill that has already been through this

House, a bill that will make it much easier to hire a policeman.

Now, if a policeman wants to do his job, sometimes they have to arrest people, sometimes they have to wrestle with people. If you can wind up being sued, you are much less likely to want to do that. And when you have police that are less engaged, particularly in our busiest cities, what are you going to get? More crime. We cannot say we are serious about the spiraling number of people who are being shot to death or stabbed to death in this country until we allow the police to be police again. We have got to stop that police hatred that goes on.

And I don't care whether we eventually send a few hundred million dollars around the country to hire more police or whatever President Biden has up his sleeve, what we have got to do is we have got to build respect for police again so that they are free to maintain the safety in this country.

The third thing I will look at that I thought, again, was misleading to the public, concerns election laws. Many States, including Wisconsin, have a photo ID law. President Biden and his acolytes imply that a photo ID law is motivated by racism. Again, this is unnecessarily divisive.

One of the reasons why I feel that Joe Biden is the most divisive President in my lifetime, I have praised him for his speech last night in which he didn't call this country racist after using the racial word or white supremacy so much in his inaugural speech; nevertheless, it is a little bit ridiculous when in order to have fair elections some of us want to have photo ID and then people stand around when photo ID is needed for things that probably have a much more dramatic impact on the average person's life, but it doesn't bother them.

We had a requirement here in town that you present proof of vaccine with which you had to produce a photo ID, if you wanted to go to a restaurant in this town. I would say it is a fairly significant thing. Did anybody say that the District of Columbia was being racist because they required a photo ID if I want to eat at a restaurant?

They want to look at my ID before I get in an airplane. If I had to fly somewhere to get some surgery, if I had to fly somewhere to see an ailing relative, that could be a real life-changing experience. Does anybody say, oh, it is racist to require a photo ID if I got on an airplane? We just put up with this routinely.

Nevertheless, President Biden fans the flames of division by claiming that those of us who want to make sure that we have fair elections are motivated by racism when photo IDs are needed so commonly.

The next thing I want to point out that I think he gave short shrift to with an insultingly small amount of time was the huge number of people who are dying of drug overdoses in this country.

I got this job only 7 years ago. At the time, 47,000 people a year died of drug overdoses. By comparison, in 12 years during the Vietnam war, 57,000 people died. And every politician was supposed to talk about it. Now we shoot up from 47,000 to 100,000 people, and President Biden can't even bring himself to talk about fentanyl, the drug responsible for most of those deaths.

I don't know why he wouldn't talk about fentanyl. My guess is because overwhelmingly it is coming across the southern border, and he doesn't want to do anything about the southern border. However, I would hope in the future, President Biden would meet with law enforcement around the country, find out what it is like to have to tell the parents or siblings or children of the people who have died that their relative has died. That is a horrible thing.

And I think to gloss over the 100,000 deaths we have every year in this country—twice the number of people who died in the 12 years in Vietnam—was I thought very callous. But, again, I would encourage President Biden to ask members of his administration to get out and about a little bit, talk to relatives of people who have died of drug overdoses, particularly fentanyl, and maybe it will cause him to devote a little bit more time on that in next year's State of the Union address when he realizes what a horrible situation we have.

There are many other things that I don't think were addressed accurately or in depth during the State of the Union address that should have been.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I thank Mr. GROTHMAN. That was well said. There is lot. We know you can go all night because there was a lot to complain about.

Madam Speaker, tonight you have heard the response of so many of my Republican colleagues to the lackluster State of the Union address that was held here last evening. Perhaps the most glaring problem with his speech is that the President tried to ignore the fact that it is his lack of leadership that is what has created this dangerous situation that we are all in right now. All the crises you have heard about, the American people know the facts.

I grew up in the seventies and eighties. I was a child of the Reagan era, and we remember in the Cold War he reminded us we maintain the peace through our strength. What he communicated to us so clearly is weakness invites aggression. We have projected weakness on the world stage, and it is inviting Russian aggression. We pray and hope that we do not get a similar aggression from our other adversaries like China, North Korea, Iran, and the rest.

The only thing holding back terrorists and tyrants and dictators and rogue operators around the globe is their perception of a strong America. That is what we stand for. We wish we could have heard that from the President in a more honest tone last night, but we didn't get it.

So we are here. We are going to continue to work on this side of the aisle to fix these problems, and we look forward to the election cycle this fall where we believe the fortunes around here are going to change pretty substantially.

Madam Speaker, I thank my colleagues for being here tonight, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President.

#### CONGRESS MUST UNIFY AND STAND FOR THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, last evening the President of the United States was strong, and he was clear to stay away from divisive rhetoric. But do my friends on the other side of the aisle realize that anything that has not been accomplished is because they have been obstructionists?

The Wall Street Journal says that the President and his American Rescue Plan has led to less damage, and it is the biggest and best recovery, at least in the past 50 years. It has had the least economic impact in terms of long-term unemployment, weak labor markers, inexperienced workers, evictions and foreclosures. President Biden's American Rescue Plan has led to less of that than any recovery in the last 50 years.

We know that in Ukraine it is a disaster. People are dying. It is Putin's war, but the President has brought NATO together.

And, yes, if we could pass Build Back Better, which they have obstructed, we would be able to have childcare for all of America.

So I wanted to just, for this one moment, get on the floor to say in all that they have said, why don't they take the call of the President? Let's unify and stand for the American people. Stop complaining, and let's get to work. President Biden called us to work as a strong America.

#### FULL EQUALITY FOR PUERTO RICO

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2021, the Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Puerto Rico (Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN) for 30 minutes.

##### GENERAL LEAVE

Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the subject of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Puerto Rico?

There was no objection.

Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN. Madam Speaker, I rise today joined by a good group of colleagues and legislators here in the House to commemorate the 105th anniversary of granting U.S. citizenship to the people of Puerto Rico and to reaffirm our commitment to full equality for the island's two million Americans, which can only be achieved through statehood.

Many people will ask how long has Puerto Rico been part of the United States? Before the Spanish-American War, Puerto Rico was part of Spain. After the Spanish-American War we became a possession, a territory of the United States in 1898.

In 1906, President Theodore Roosevelt called on Congress to confer American citizenship to Puerto Ricans. Legislation was introduced to that effect between 1912 and 1913, which was supported by President William Howard Taft and then the Wilson administration. President Wilson had even campaigned in 1912 on a promise to ensure U.S. citizenship for Puerto Ricans.

On this day, March 2nd, President Woodrow Wilson signed the Jones-Shafroth Act, which extended statutory U.S. citizenship to the residents of the island.

The Jones-Shafroth Act would not be the last time Congress acted on a question of citizenship. In 1940, the Nationality Act conferred birthright citizenship to persons born in Puerto Rico.

The signing of the 1917 law cemented our relationship as an integral part of the United States.

For 150 years, Puerto Ricans have been proud American citizens, and we have contributed greatly to this country in every field of endeavor. We even have Supreme Court judges, a lot of entrepreneurs, and many others in many areas. We proudly uphold and defend the ideals that define our Nation, including more than 235,000 Puerto Ricans who have honorably served in the U.S. Armed Forces fighting side-by-side with our fellow citizens from the States.

Yet, despite our contributions, despite a longstanding commitment to the values that come with being an American citizen, the reality is that we are still not equal. That is the reality of Puerto Ricans every day. And then you have 3.2 million Americans living on the island and more than 5 million living on the mainland. That tells you that because of the current territorial status, Americans in Puerto Rico lack full voting representation in this Congress.

For example, I can represent people on this floor, but I cannot vote here for any measure that affects my island.

□ 1845

I do the job of at least four Members of Congress. We do not have Senators that can be the voice of Puerto Rico because they are not elected on the island. Yet, we need to apply all Federal laws to the island but without having a say or a vote on each of them.

Our people cannot vote for our President, our Commander in Chief, and we have no say in the Federal decision-making process, which impacts every aspect of our lives.

Even though we are U.S. citizens and the Federal Government can and often does treat the island unequally under Federal laws and programs, and while it is true that Congress could pass legislation today to address some of those disparities, it is similarly true that any future Congress could undo such efforts.

When you revise our Constitution, specifically, the territorial clause of the U.S. Constitution, Article IV, Section 3, it says specifically that: "The Congress shall have power to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States."

Yet, we are the most powerful Nation on Earth still having a colony in the Caribbean for more than 105 years.

That is the reason. Because we are a territory, we will be always at Congress' mercy. As a territory, we will never truly enjoy the same rights and responsibilities as our fellow citizens in the States.

Only statehood can guarantee our full equality as U.S. citizens. That is why the people of Puerto Rico have voted to reject the current territorial status, not once, not twice, three times in a row. To be admitted as a State of the Union, most recently in November 2020 when a clear majority, an absolute majority of the people, 73 percent of the people who voted in that election, of those 73 percent of the people who voted, 53 percent voted for statehood. That is an absolute majority.

You don't have any delegates. You don't have any mail. This is direct votes, in-person votes of the people of the island asking for statehood. Even statehood got more votes than any politician on the island. Statehood got more votes than any political party on the island. That means that is the biggest consensus ever on the island, three times in a row.

As we commemorate the 105th anniversary of our American citizenship, it is crucial that Congress act to end Puerto Rico's undemocratic territorial status and to respond to a vote for equality through statehood.

I am proud to have partnered with Congressman DARREN SOTO, our brother from Florida, to introduce bipartisan legislation to achieve this using H.R. 1522, the Puerto Rico Statehood Admission Act, that will make a formal offer of statehood.

Never before has Congress even asked the people of Puerto Rico whether we want to continue as a territorial colonial status or we want to achieve statehood or independence.

This will be the first time ever this question will be made to the people on the island coming from Congress in a binding process—same thing happened in Hawaii, same thing happened in

Alaska. They were asked the simple question: Do you want to become a State of the Union, yes or no?

That same question was a referendum we held locally in Puerto Rico by the local laws with that majority.

To say that, this bill will make a formal offer of statehood, outlining a clear process to enable the island's admission into the Union, should it be ratified by Puerto Rican voters in a federally sponsored yes-or-no referendum.

Having said that, I think it is time. It is long overdue that we resolve the Puerto Rican unfinished democracy business.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SOTO), our main sponsor on the Democrat side.

Mr. SOTO. Madam Speaker, I thank the Resident Commissioner.

Madam Speaker, here is my partner in equality in the Resident Commissioner JENNIFFER GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN. And she is not the only one. Florida is in the House tonight in support of you—Representative DEMINGS, Representative WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Representative SALAZAR. We are all here to support our brothers and sisters back in my family's native island.

This is a little bit about history today, 105 years of citizenship. You know, I checked on ancestry.com, and the roots of my family back in Puerto Rico go back way further than they could ever tell—on the Soto side and on the Casanova side—with a few coming in the mid-1800s from the Canary Islands, but the rest back further than you can uncover through the internet.

When Teddy Roosevelt comes up on that San Juan Hill and you have the Spanish-American War, my relatives, my ancestors, were already there for an unknown and distant amount of time.

I also see Representative WILD. Representative WILD, thank you for being here as well from Pennsylvania. Pennsylvania is in the House.

When I think about the turn of the 20th century, my ancestors, some of whom I got to meet, like my great-grandmother, Altagracia Casanova, who still farmed by the time I was a little kid in Sabana Hoyos in Puerto Rico, they became citizens by statute. Then my great-grandparents, they had draft cards. They went and served in World War I. The first shots of World War I were fired off the coast of San Juan as the Germans attempted to enter the Caribbean.

From there, we saw my grandparents stationed in places in the Caribbean in South America during World War II. We know of the great, famed Borinqueneers serving in all of those wars together, as well as Korea.

This citizenship has been earned, encouraged, and in blood, in contributions in science and art and manufacturing and in so many other ways that have made this such a great United States of America.

But it is the recent history that I am most concerned about. After the 936 ex-

emption ended, my family moved to central Florida from Puerto Rico. They were worried about the economic climate. They moved to central Florida for economic opportunity. My family up north, where I was raised, we soon followed and found ourselves in central Florida.

We don't want people to have to be forced to relocate because they are worried about economic prosperity. That is already in our family history as well.

Then you look at after that recession coming in, then PROMESA, austerity measures, that would never happen to a State. The types of cuts to government, the type of attack on sovereignty was terrible. We have many pensioners who served as civil servants in Puerto Rico who now live in central Florida, places like Representative DEMINGS' and my districts and, I have no doubt, in south Florida and WASSERMAN SCHULTZ' and SALAZAR's districts as well. So it affects us directly and indirectly.

Then we see, on top of that, Hurricane Maria. What devastation, the highest death toll of any natural disaster in modern American history. We see how important it is to have representation and how important it is to have fair treatment.

Then it has been the latest battles over these last couple of years. You and I have fought together, along with our allies here, on everything from food assistance to Medicaid to finally getting Puerto Rico treated equally in the American Rescue Plan, to finally getting the people of Puerto Rico treated equally in infrastructure.

But those battles will continue if we do not resolve the territorial status. That is why I was honored to co-introduce our bill, together with our friends, to admit Puerto Rico as a State, after a binding plebiscite, of course.

I feel very good about where we are headed, to a bipartisan vote on the floor and putting forward a bill that the Senators can vote for.

This is about making sure, as we see tyranny attacks of democracy versus autocracy in Ukraine and, frankly, in so many places around the Caribbean, Central and South America, this is where we can take a stand in the Caribbean for democracy and give our brothers and sisters back on the island the opportunity to forge your own destinies, and your Florida Rican brothers and sisters are with you.

Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN. Madam Speaker, I say thank you to our main sponsor. I will say, I don't have the vote here in the House so I depend on all Members of the House to support Puerto Rico in many ways.

In that sense, I will be always grateful, DARREN, for your commitment and your help.

Madam Speaker, I recognize now a dear friend from Florida as well who is here.

Before recognizing her, I recognize a former Member of the House and current Governor of Puerto Rico. Pedro

Pierluisi is here on the floor of the House. Thank you, Governor, for supporting this.

Madam Speaker, this is a bipartisan issue. You won't find any other bill that will have bipartisan support. This is not a Republican issue. This is not a Democratic issue. This is the cost of equal rights. This is civil rights. This is democracy.

Madam Speaker, I cannot find a better person to speak about that than my good friend from Miami, Congresswoman SALAZAR.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. SALAZAR).

Ms. SALAZAR. Madam Speaker, I thank the Resident Commissioner.

Madam Speaker, for over 120 years, Puerto Rico, as we have said here, has enriched the United States with its culture and its people.

The beautiful island of Puerto Rico that I know so well is the jewel of the Caribbean. Millions of Americans have flocked to its beaches and rainforests to soak in the incredible natural beauty of the island of Puerto Rico.

With that background, 105 years ago, as we have heard before, Puerto Ricans became citizens of this great country, the United States. Puerto Ricans are true Americans and true patriots because over 35,000 of them currently serve in the United States Armed Forces.

Madam Speaker, 235,000 Puerto Ricans are veterans who have served alongside their fellow countrymen from the mainland, from the beaches of Normandy to the Mekong Delta. Its people, the Puerto Ricans, have made the ultimate sacrifice in the name of freedom and in the name of the United States of America.

I should say that Puerto Rico holds a very special place in my heart because after my parents fled Castro's Cuba, my family found refuge in San Juan, the capital of the island of Puerto Rico. Because of that decision, I spent a fantastic childhood in the island because we went to live in paradise in the 1960s.

It was in Puerto Rico where I first learned about American values. It was in Puerto Rico where I learned the meaning behind the American flag and the central value of freedom and liberty.

Puerto Ricans received the Cuban exile community with open arms. That is why today I take this opportunity from the floor of the United States Congress, as a Congresswoman for the city of Miami, the heart of the Cuban exile community in the United States. I thank the Puerto Ricans for their noble act of welcoming millions and millions of Cubans to the island and giving them the possibility of living in freedom, in peace, and living in paradise.

Puerto Ricans have welcomed people from around the world to visit paradise and the Caribbean on American soil, the best of both worlds. Today, Puerto Ricans are American ambassadors,

showing the beauty and diversity of our great country to the rest of the world.

For that reason, I thank my very good friend, mi amiga, Resident Commissioner JENNIFFER GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN, for her leadership on this floor. She is a relentless champion for the island's future, for what the island deserves, and for what we need to see for the future of Puerto Rico.

Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN. Thank you, Maria Elvira. You touched my heart with those words.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Ms. WILD).

Ms. WILD. Madam Speaker, I am proud to rise today on behalf of the more than 80,000 Puerto Rican constituents who call my district, Pennsylvania's Greater Lehigh Valley, home.

My community would not be what it is without the contributions of the Puerto Rican community. The United States would not be what it is without the contributions of this community. Every aspect of our national legacy, our cultural and artistic heritage, our groundbreaking discoveries in science and technology, the dynamism of our economy, and the strength of our Armed Forces has been shaped indelibly by these fellow citizens.

□ 1900

And yet despite their service, residents of the island cannot vote for the Commander in Chief. They lack voting representation in Congress. And despite paying into programs like Medicare and Medicaid, they do not have equitable coverage under these programs.

I am here to deliver a clear message. As United States citizens, the people of Puerto Rico have the right to full representation in their government. This is a principle at the very core of our Nation's founding. It should not be controversial, and, in fact, it is widely accepted among Americans of both political parties.

In fact, my colleague who has gathered us all here today and who has introduced the Puerto Rico Statehood Admission Act is a Republican. Thank you for having me. Today, the 105th anniversary of the date when the people of Puerto Rico became United States citizens must mark the moment when we finally begin the work of passing legislation to give the people in Puerto Rico a long overdue voice and a vote in their future.

Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ).

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Madam Speaker, I am proud to stand today with my friends and colleagues as we mark the 105th anniversary since United States citizenship was granted to the people of Puerto Rico. In many ways, today is a joyous day in recognition of the decades of activism undertaken by our Puerto Rican sisters and brothers.

Yet, amidst the celebration, it is also an acknowledgement that for too long we have treated Puerto Rico and her residents as second-class citizens with laws and policies that put them at a real disadvantage. The residents of Puerto Rico, more than 3 million strong, pay Federal taxes, are U.S. citizens with U.S. passports and U.S. currency, and they have long served bravely in our military, just ask any Borinqueneer who fought valiantly in the Korean war.

Yet, the people of Puerto Rico continue to be denied equal rights, including voting representation in the United States Congress. This inequality has real consequences. As we saw so vividly in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria, Puerto Rico faced injustices that no U.S. State would ever endure.

These inequities exist not only when it comes to recovery assistance, it can be seen in tax and Medicare inequities. Put simply, these disparities are un-American. A stronger political voice can help remedy that.

Today, I stand in solidarity with my colleagues in calling for what has been long overdue: statehood for Puerto Rico.

In 2020, Puerto Ricans voted overwhelmingly in support of statehood. The Puerto Rican people should be given a chance to cast a vote where those results will be respected. Now is the time for us to listen loudly and clearly to the calls from the Puerto Rican people. It is a matter of civil rights both on the island and in the greater diaspora.

Legislators on both sides of the aisle understand how crucial it is that we fully support this effort, and I am proud to work with my friend, JENNIFFER GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN, and was proud to work for many years with her predecessor, now Governor, Pedro Pierluisi. Today is proof of that.

Puerto Ricans have made their desire for statehood clear, and Congress must follow suit. I will continue fighting for statehood to ensure that every citizen's voice is heard and to give respect to the Puerto Rican people that is long overdue.

As we commemorate this 105th anniversary of citizenship for Puerto Ricans, let us remember that Puerto Rican statehood is a long overdue step toward equality and democracy for all. You cannot have true equality without full representation. We will be a better and stronger Nation when we include Puerto Rico as our 51st State.

Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN. Madam Speaker, I would like to recognize at this time and yield to the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. DEMINGS).

Mrs. DEMINGS. Madam Speaker, we are a government of the people, by the people, and for the people, but our brothers and sisters, our fellow Americans on the island of Puerto Rico are not recognized as a government by the people. Puerto Rican Americans received citizenship 105 years ago today.



If we are going to truly be the land of the free, we must make good on America's promise to be a government of the people for all people. We need to be who we say we are. We need to be the country where every voice and every person matters. For over a century, the residents of Puerto Rico have been treated as second-class citizens within our country. It is un-American and it is unjust.

Second-class citizens not only in their vote, but also in healthcare, senior assistance, and the Child Tax Credit. This is wrong. Today, on the 105th anniversary of the citizenship for Puerto Rico, it is time for us to stand up, yet again, and declare that equal rights are an American value, and that fairness and justice are American values, and that the Americans on the island of Puerto Rico must have justice, must have fair treatment, and must have statehood.

We fought this year to ensure that the residents of Puerto Rico would start to receive equal treatment on Federal programs like Social Security, Medicare, and the Child Tax Credit. This fight is not over, and we are not giving up.

Yet, even with the weight of this fight for a century, I feel optimistic. In fact, I feel better than I ever have before. Puerto Ricans have spoken with a clear voice, with a fair and open vote, and demanded that it is time for full representation.

I am grateful for the leadership of Congresswoman GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN and Congressman SOTO on this issue, and I look forward to continuing the work in Congress until we get this done.

Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN. Madam Speaker, how much time do I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman has 5 minutes remaining.

Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN. Madam Speaker, you heard many of the Members of Congress supporting this quest of Puerto Rico's civil rights and democracy rights to vote. Sometimes people forget the contributions people of Puerto Rico have made to this great Nation, contributions that we feel proud of, like the nine Puerto Rican Medal of Honor recipients: Private First Class Fernando Luis Garcia, Master Sergeant Juan Negron, Private Demensio Rivera, Private Miguel Armando Vera, Private First Class Carlos Lozada, Staff Sergeant Conde Falcon, Captain Euripides Rubio, Specialist Hector Santiago, Captain Humbert Roque, and I can speak about many others.

Historically, Puerto Rico has ranked among the top U.S. jurisdictions in terms of per capita military service. It is estimated that more than 18,000 Puerto Ricans served our Nation during World War I; 65,000 Puerto Ricans during World War II; 61,000 during the Korean war; 48,000 during the Vietnam war; 10,000 during the Gulf war, and 25,000 during Operation Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. Yet, just last

week we have 300 more that are already in Poland with the current situation in Ukraine. That is the patriotism Puerto Ricans feel about this Nation.

Why do all those soldiers never receive the same benefits from being in the military when they come back home? Why should they be treated differently with even programs that do not apply to them? And they cannot vote for the Commander in Chief? Even this Congress gave the Congressional Medal of Honor to our Borinqueneers, the 65th Regiment that fought in Korea, but yet they cannot vote for their Commander in Chief.

Over 1,200 U.S. citizens of Puerto Rico have died while serving, paying the ultimate sacrifice in defense of America's freedom, while lacking full voting representations and equality back home. Defending freedom, defending democracy around the world, but not having them back home.

Our island is proud and rich in the tradition of military service. Today, thousands of Puerto Ricans serve on Active Duty and Reserves and all branches of the U.S. Armed Forces. Approximately, 8,400 currently serve in the Puerto Rico Army National Guard, and since 9/11 they have carried out over 16,000 deployments, more than 34 States in the Union.

Over 90,000 American veterans call Puerto Rico home. Unfortunately, despite our military contributions and their honorable service on behalf of the Nation's ideals, the current territorial status hurts Puerto Rico's veterans and servicemembers. It denies them the representation in the Senate and in the House, and it denies them the right to vote for the President. It perpetuates the inequities of Federal laws and programs which are detrimental to veterans in terms of economic opportunity, health, security, and quality of life.

Statehood for Puerto Rico and congressional action to end the territorial status will benefit our veterans and the thousands of Puerto Ricans who currently serve in the U.S. Armed Forces. It will provide them real democracy through a vote and equal representation in Congress; through the ability to elect their Commander in Chief; and through a permanent union with their fellow citizens in the States.

This is the time to respond for Puerto Rico. This is the right of the island to become part of this great Nation, more than 105 years since being a territory. This is the time for Congress to act.

You have H.R. 1522, a bipartisan bill with more than 79 cosponsors, Republicans and Democrats, asking for statehood and equality. With that, statehood will address many of the inequities in the Federal law that currently hinder economic growth and progress in Puerto Rico.

Madam Speaker, we celebrate the U.S. citizenship for Puerto Rico, but we want statehood now.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

#### CURRENT BORDER INSECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2021, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. DAVIDSON) for 30 minutes.

Mr. DAVIDSON. Madam Speaker, I have requested this time to address part of the State of the Union that was not addressed last night. In fact, we saw that the President was so bold as to say that the border is secure and tout the fact that they have caught 2 million people at the border, as if that is success. That is what was said.

What wasn't said is what has been going on at the border for a long time and has been made worse by the policies that Joe Biden and his administration have put in place. Frankly, by the United States laws that he and his administration have ignored, and that Secretary Mayorkas enables every day that he leads the Department of Homeland Security down the wrong path for our country.

So, we are here to talk about, stop the cartels. We are introducing a bill called the Stop the Cartels Act. We spend so much time on the sympathetic cause of immigration and we conflate border security with immigration.

We can have an incredibly secure border regardless of our immigration policy, and border security is, in fact, national security. The cartels pose a serious threat to the United States of America. The products that they push in our communities have killed over 100,000 people.

□ 1915

This past year, the leading cause of death for 18 to 45 year olds is fatal overdoses. The drugs are bad, but now they are poisoned with fentanyl, and we are not taking the threat seriously. So the first portion of the Stop the Cartels Act will focus on gathering intelligence.

As we look at the country of Mexico, our southern neighbor, it controls the whole land portion of our southern border. That border is controlled by the cartels. I had Brandon Judd, the president of the Customs and Border Patrol Union, at a hearing that we had to have offsite because Speaker PELOSI won't have the hearing on the topic in any of our hearing rooms. She won't let the committees of jurisdiction deal with it, so Republicans are forced to go offsite to talk about this important topic.

When I asked him: Who controls the border? You or the cartels? Do the cartels control the border more than you?

He said: You are not putting words in my mouth. That is the exact point. The cartels control the border. We don't control the border.

I said: Why don't you control the border?

He said: Because of policies.

Do you need more resources?

That is a different topic. What we need is good policy. We had policies

that were working to control the border, and now we have policies that are not working.

The Border Patrol controls it. We are not even on defense, we are not even on the field, and we are not even in the stadium because the policies of this administration changed so that it gave complete control of our southern border to the cartels.

Now, we could talk about all the corruption and the problems that the cartels are causing for Mexico. That is a problem that Mexico has to deal with, and we should be able to help them once we prioritize intelligence collection on the cartels on par with the other threats to our country, on par with China, with Russia, with Iran, with North Korea, with al-Qaida, with ISIS, and with the known credible threats to our country.

The cartels should have the same level of intelligence priority as those other hostile or potentially hostile countries. And the cartels are clearly hostile. They do a lot of business here—billions and billions of dollars.

So we have highlighted this map. These are the areas that we already know which cartels control. You have the states of Mexico listed, but you also have color coded which cartels control that. We would like to have the granular detail of what is the org chart, who leads the cartels. I am not saying we don't have that, but we do not have it at the right priority. And then when we do have the intelligence—just as we have seen, the intelligence community got Ukraine incredibly right. The problem wasn't that we didn't have good intelligence with respect to Russia, the problem was the administration didn't do the right thing with the intelligence. But let's first get the right intelligence on the cartels.

So the next thing is we have cities, States, and counties that are completely ignoring the United States law. It is a Federal policy to decide who is a citizen and who is not a citizen. And when we go to enforce our laws as to who is here legally versus who is here illegally, that is clearly Federal jurisdiction.

We have cities, States, counties, and other communities that are ignoring these laws—sanctuary cities. And those sanctuary cities are saying: Not only would this be a great place to base your illicit activity, cartels, we will protect you by being a sanctuary. Please come locate your illicit activity here. Bring your drugs, bring your guns, bring your labor trafficking, your sex trafficking, your human trafficking, and bring your money laundering business and every form of corruption into our communities. That is what these first two maps show.

But let me show you next what the impact on our communities is, Madam Speaker.

This young lady to my right is Lizzie Murphy. She died at 21 years old. Drugs are bad, but now they are poisoned

with fentanyl. Seeing that it is not a good idea to take it without a prescription or a specific use—a lot of people refer to it as a safe party drug—it is a bad decision. But it is not supposed to kill you. But when it is laced with fentanyl, that is what is happening to our young people. That is how fentanyl killed over 60,000 Americans last year. Not all of it is in the heroin. Not all of it is in the really hard stuff. Some of it is in the stuff that people never suspect is going to kill them. They take one pill, and they are dead.

That is what happened to my friends, Mark and Kristi Murphy when their little girl took one Xanax. Their daughter—she is sitting here hugging her sister, close friends, best friends—doesn't have her sister anymore.

This is wrecking our communities, and we have got communities inviting this in by being sanctuary cities.

We have got a President of the United States who is not just doing nothing, he is doing worse than nothing. He is making it worse by empowering the cartels. They exploit people, and they cause harm to our communities.

To highlight the ways this is happening and the ways to solve it, I have asked some of my colleagues to join me in this Special Order.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. BIGGS).

Mr. BIGGS. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. It is good to be here.

I am glad my friend is raising awareness. I am going to go as quickly as I possibly can because I don't know how much time I am going to take up.

But let's talk about fentanyl for just one quick second. Local reporting out of Tucson was that last year 13 million fentanyl pills were seized in Arizona alone—13 million. DEA has said 40 percent of all pills seized have a lethal dose of fentanyl in them. I want you to think about that, Madam Speaker. You add that 13 million and you take it into what agents and local law enforcement has told us, and that is they only interdict 8 to 10 percent. That means you have got over 100 million fentanyl pills floating around.

The cartels control all of the border between every port of entry on our border with Mexico. Let me give you an example, Madam Speaker, of the story out of southern Arizona recently just in the last couple weeks.

A lady was found wandering around. Local law enforcement deputies found her and assisted her.

What did she have on her possession?

A bag full of pills. They wanted to know what this was, was this an illicit drug or illicit? What is going on?

She said: These are morning-after pills. I knew when I would be coming across the border that I would be raped multiple times so I brought a bunch of morning-after pills.

That is fact. That is what is happening. It is not humane on the border. I find myself baffled by this.

So let's talk about cartels a little bit more. In a story from just early January—and I have been down to the border and talked to this team since then, a cartel, a Mexican cartel put out a hit on Cochise County sheriffs' deputies—two of them—because they are on the border team. There is a small border team down there. They are very effective. They had a hit put on them by a cartel.

So what happens? What happens?

Why is the Biden administration ignoring this crisis?

Let's take a look at something else. In September of last year I said: How many unaccompanied children have been brought into the country?

One hundred ten thousand roughly.

They finally responded to a series of questions I had just this week.

They said: We have lost contact with 20,000 of those children.

They basically have lost 20,000 unaccompanied children.

This is the border under President Biden.

Now, in Cochise County, 82 miles, a remote border crossing area, between the Border Patrol and the Cochise County Sheriff's Office, about 16,000 illegal immigrants are detected every month in a huge, huge county. Two years ago the county recorded an average of 4 to 500 illegal aliens per month. Let's give it to you more starkly, Madam Speaker: under the Trump policies, we slowed down illegal immigration. Under the Biden policies, we went from 4 to 500 people a month in this massive county to now 16,000 a month.

What are they paying the cartels?

A minimum of \$1,000, but typically more like \$4,000 per person coming in. Most of these folks don't have \$4,000.

So what happens?

They become indentured servants of cartels, and they are located in—and I know Mr. DAVIDSON is going to show you a map, Madam Speaker—they are in virtually every community in this country.

There is a reporter named Jorge Ventura. Jorge does a lot of work on the border issues. And I want to talk to you about cartels again and how they have infiltrated not just the border but they are also beyond the border. A year ago there were illegal marijuana farms in southern California. There are about 100 in L.A. County. It is a huge county both geographically and population wise. Its neighboring county, San Bernardino County, had about 2 or 300. Today over 200 illicit marijuana farms are in L.A. County and over 1,100 in San Bernardino County.

Now, why is that important?

It is important for you to understand that those are coming in from cartels. The mayor of Lancaster, Rex Parris, said in July of last year that it is the cartels. They had seized more than 16 tons of marijuana worth about \$1.2 billion, and the mayor said: "We are very, very close to driving down the freeway and seeing bodies hanging from the overpasses. That is what is coming."

Why does he say that?

Because the cartels are ruthless. They have little value for human life. When you hear about children, toddlers being thrown over a border fence, that is the coyotes.

Whom do they work for?

The cartels. When you hear of children 2, 3, and 4 years of age wandering around in 115-degree heat in Arizona's desert without an adult present and without water, that is the cartels. They don't care about human life. This is a business enterprise, and the product is to move people and drugs into the country.

So what happened just a week ago, not even a week ago?

Prosecutors in Mexico in the town of San Jose de Gracia in the western State of Michoacan said that they can't determine how many people were killed because attackers cleaned up the scene and removed any bodies.

Mexicans have been left wondering what happened to about one dozen men who disappeared after they were seen lined up against a wall by drug cartel gunmen in this small village.

In a video filmed by a resident of the town that was later posted on social media, bursts of gunfire break out, smoke covers the scene, the camera cuts away, and all the men, perhaps as many as 17, were killed.

That is what cartels do. Cartels do not care about human life. And when I have had multiple briefings, as I go down to the border virtually every month of every year, I wonder where the border czar in this administration is. She got to El Paso, almost made it to the border, and didn't quite get there. It is kind of like when she went over to Ukraine, she made it to Germany but didn't make it into Ukraine.

I look, and I say: What happened?

Why is this happening?

And my briefers tell me the border is controlled by cartels. Between every port of entry no one enters this country without a cartel knowing about it.

When I was in the Tucson sector right before Christmas, I went down and you see 2 miles of fencing, and there is 8 feet of gap, then another 2 miles of fencing, and then it just stops, and then it goes for literally 60 miles with no fencing other than the Normandy barrier. I went to the gap, and I am standing there looking into Mexico. You can see, Madam Speaker, that gap is where all the pathways lead, and there is all the debris and crud that is out there.

I said to my folks who were with me: Please videotape it because I am going to explain what was going on here.

I didn't bother to tell CBP, because I get down a lot. Sometimes I tell them I am going to be there. An agent rolls up.

He said: Who are you talking to?

He didn't know who I was.

I said: I am not talking to anyone. I am doing the video here for my constituents.

He said: Oh. I thought you were talking to the cartel scouts.

I said: What do you mean?

He said: We literally chased—before we detected you, we chased four cartel scouts back up through that gap, and they sit in a hooch on this little bluff.

That is where the cartel scouts are as they are sending people through.

□ 1930

The way it works is this. They will send a group of 100 people to some place, maybe the San Miguel gate down near Sassabe, near the Tohono O'odham Reservation. That takes the four or five people that are trying to patrol that area. They will go to that gate. They have to process those individuals. It is so remote that it takes literally hours to remove those people and get them bused to a detention facility and processed.

In the meantime, they will see what we call "known got-aways," dozens of known got-aways rolling through other parts of that border. They are dressed in camouflage. They are wearing carpet shoes. They have got backpacks filled with fentanyl and methamphetamine on their backs.

I am just telling you, I appreciate my friend from Ohio, his efforts, and this very important piece of legislation. And I call upon this administration, don't tell the American people—I am reminded of the "Darkest Hour." It is a movie with Winston Churchill. The King says to Winston: Don't lie to the people. Tell them the truth.

I am asking this administration: Tell the people the truth. They can take it. They understand.

Because last year, over 2 million, about 2,500,000 people, entered this country illegally; another 1.2 to 1.3 million entered legally. Now, of those 2.5 million, probably about 1.5 million are wandering around this country. They are somewhere in this country today. This administration let them go.

Madam Speaker, we have to get control of our border. I find it remarkable that the deputy Homeland Security director was saying that we really need to protect the borders, that you won't have a sovereign nation without a protected border. But he wasn't talking about our border, which isn't protected. He was talking about the Ukrainian border.

I asked them to have the same concern and care for the U.S.-Mexico border as they profess to have for the Ukraine border.

Mr. DAVIDSON. Madam Speaker, look, if we look over on the far right, how does a young lady lose her sister? How does a young lady, 21 years old, in Ohio wind up dead from fentanyl poisoning, poison in the drugs?

They know drugs are bad, but they are not supposed to kill them. They are in Ohio. Ohio is not—I mean, we do have a border. It is on Lake Erie with Canada. That is not the border that is causing our young people to die. That is not the one that is causing the leading cause of death for 18- to 45-year-olds to be fatal overdoses.

It is all the way down here on the southern border. And it is not officially the Mexican Government. It is the cartels. And we refuse to collect the intelligence at the right level.

At our southern border, we have a joint task force. We don't have a joint interagency task force. We have that out in the Pacific Ocean. We have that in the Caribbean and the Atlantic Ocean. But we don't have a joint interagency task force.

The place probably that it makes the absolute most sense to have an interagency task force is at the southern border. We have Customs and Border Protection. We have people that are focused on smuggling of people, smuggling of drugs, of guns. We have people that are focused on counterfeit property.

We are focused on levying taxes at the border, inspecting fruit at the border, and everything else. But we don't have an interagency task force that uses the power of our military to conduct surveillance, that uses the power of our Director of National Intelligence and all the resources that we have to know everything about the cartels, not some benign name like Sinaloa, but, specifically, who leads that.

We know who leads Russia. We know it is Vladimir Putin. They are a nation-state.

But we have these transnational criminal organizations that go unnamed. Again, they are involved in the activities not because they care so much about the activity itself. They want the money.

We don't have an organized way to collect all the intelligence on the money. What yachts are they buying? What properties do they own? How do they move this heavily cash business into other goods and services?

They move everything that can store value possible all over the world to try to clean up this money. We don't have the kind of pressure that was just brought to bear on Vladimir Putin going against the cartels.

Vladimir Putin we finally recognized as evil as he invaded Ukraine. But when he was doing the menacing, threatening activity, when we had at least gone so far as to collect the intelligence, we didn't take the actions that could have stopped him.

Here, we can't even go so far as to collect the right level of intelligence. Intelligence is the first thing.

The next slide I have deals with the sanctuary cities. We are going to defund the sanctuary cities. They can't keep getting funded. They have to conform to U.S. law.

We just had a Supreme Court ruling that said if you want to get paid for providing Medicare and Medicaid services, you have to make your employees conform. We can do that to American citizens, and we can't do that to deal with the cartels.

Now, it is a different topic, I will grant you, but it is the same thing, the strings attached to the money. We

have to put the strings attached to the money to say, if you want the money that is collected here in the city, you have to reflect the laws of the United States of America, and you can't offer sanctuary to these cartels that are killing our young people.

There is more to the bill, but let me highlight in another way the consequences of not stopping the cartels.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BUDD).

Mr. BUDD. Madam Speaker, up there where you sit, last night Joe Biden stood here and delivered his State of the Union address. He spoke about lots of issues. But he didn't even touch on the biggest issue facing our country today, and that is the southern border.

Make no mistake, the state of our border, it is not good. The Border Patrol has encountered over 150,000 illegal aliens—not last year but just last month, in January, just 33 days ago, when they tallied up those numbers. That is a 96 percent, almost 100 percent increase from last year.

Over 62,000, out of that 150,000, 62,000 of those individuals were released into the United States. It is unbelievable. It is unacceptable. It is dangerous.

When I get to travel around North Carolina and visit with law enforcement, as I love to do and have the honor of doing, the sheriffs tell me there are about 3,200 counties in this amazing country. They said every single sheriff right now is a border sheriff because of the policies that are happening right here, just down the street in the White House. There are drugs, fentanyl.

We think about the devastation and the suffering years ago in the Vietnam war, a decade where we lost about 70,000 servicemembers. We think about what we lose every single year, not in a decade, but every single year from drug overdoses. That is about 70,000, largely because of what happens at the border.

Just a few months ago, when I was down there visiting with our Customs and Border Patrol agents, they were off duty that day. We were in a pickup truck as far as from here to, Madam Speaker, where you sit. They slammed on the brakes and said: I am sorry. I have got to go on duty. I have to arrest these cartel members.

He said the sad thing is they will be back out on the street or, in this case, back out in the desert in just a few days.

We looked all up and down the border, and there was tens of millions of dollars of steel just laying there. Then there was tens of millions of dollars' worth of idle diesel equipment that has been idle since January 20 of last year.

He said: You know what? We need to finish this wall.

That is what the Customs and Border Patrol agent told me. He says: But what we really need, what we really need is an administration that has our back and, sir, right now, we don't have that.

Instead, Madam Speaker, what we have is an astounding 11,200 pounds of fentanyl, deadly fentanyl that was seized last year, and even more has made it into the homeland. It is killing thousands of our fellow Americans. Dangerous cartels are flooding this country with counterfeit prescription pills containing fentanyl and meth. All of this can be prevented and should be prevented. It must be prevented.

The bottom line is it is time to finish the wall. It is time to support our border agents and end this administration's dereliction of duty.

Mr. DAVIDSON. Madam Speaker, this is a gravely serious matter. I highlighted a young lady, Lizzie Murphy; her sister, Catherine; her mom and dad, Mark and Kristi Murphy, who lost their daughter, their best friend, their sister.

Communities like this are losing young people all over our country. I kind of wish I could say that it was only happening where the sanctuary cities are pictured. I kind of wish I could say it was only right next to the border that we have the problem.

But our whole country is experiencing the problem because we won't secure the border. This administration won't secure the border. They won't listen to the men and women whose duty it is to secure the border.

I went down there a week after Joe Biden was inaugurated and they said: We told him. We will see what happens. They said they are going to do these things, and we told them this is what is going to happen.

Now, when we go to the border, when they come and talk to us up here, the exact same things they knew were going to happen are happening.

We stopped sanctuary cities. We put strings attached to the grants. But the other thing is we have this Flores settlement. Congress has not provided clarity on the Flores settlement, so we provide funding so that we can hold people as long as they need to be held till their cases are adjudicated on the Mexican side of the border.

We put pressure on the Government of Mexico to cooperate with us in this, and we put pressure on the Government of Mexico to resume their cooperation on intelligence-gathering.

Just yesterday, ahead of the State of the Union, I have my county sheriffs—Butler County Sheriff Jones was here in Washington, D.C. Why? Not because he is a border sheriff in the strict geographical sense, but because he is a border sheriff there in Ohio.

Let me close, Madam Speaker, by just highlighting that what happened to this family could happen to anybody. I appreciate the time to speak tonight.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

#### ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Cheryl L. Johnson, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly en-

rolled a bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 4445. An act to amend title 9 of the United States Code with respect to arbitration of disputes involving sexual assault and sexual harassment.

#### ADJOURNMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 11(b) of House Resolution 188, the House stands adjourned until 9 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon (at 7 o'clock and 42 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, March 3, 2022, at 9 a.m.

#### EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

EC-3537. A letter from the Associate Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Phosphoric Acid; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance [EPA-HQ-OPP-2020-0214; FRL-9380-01-OCSP] received February 28, 2022, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC-3538. A letter from the Associate Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Air Plan Approval; California; Ventura County Air Pollution Control District [EPA-R09-OAR-2021-0620; FRL-9188-02-R9] received February 28, 2022, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC-3539. A letter from the Associate Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Fatty Acids, Esters with Ethoxylated Triethanolamine; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance [EPA-HQ-OPP-2021-0364; FRL-9534-01-OCSP] received February 28, 2022, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC-3540. A letter from the Associate Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Fluridone; Pesticide Tolerances for Emergency Exemptions [EPA-HQ-OPP-2021-0337; FRL-9459-01-OCSP] received February 28, 2022, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC-3541. A letter from the Associate Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Adipic acid; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance [EPA-HQ-OPP-2021-0635 and EPA-HQ-OPP-2021-0636; FRL-9551-01-OCSP] received February 28, 2022, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC-3542. A letter from the Associate Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Air Plan Approval; North Carolina; Mecklenburg Volatile Organic Compounds [EPA-R04-OAR-2021-0055; FRL-8986-02-R4] received February 28, 2022,

pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC-3543. A letter from the Associate Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Air Plan Approval; Wisconsin; Permit Streamlining Updates [EPA-R05-OAR-2020-0504; FRL-9202-02-R5] received February 28, 2022, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC-3544. A letter from the Associate Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Potassium acetate; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance [EPA-HQ-OPP-2020-0349; FRL-9550-01-OCSP] received February 28, 2022, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC-3545. A letter from the Associate Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Air Plan Approval; Wisconsin; Serious Plan Elements for the Wisconsin Portion of Chicago Nonattainment Area for the 2008 Ozone Standard [EPA-R05-OAR-2020-0698; FRL-9215-02-R5] received February 28, 2022, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

## PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mrs. WAGNER:

H.R. 6891. A bill to exclude government officials of the Russian Federation from certain international meetings, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services, and in addition to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. CICILLINE (for himself, Mr. ESPAILLAT, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. HARRIS, and Ms. KAPTUR):

H.R. 6892. A bill to designate Ukraine under section 244 of the Immigration and Nationality Act to permit nationals of Ukraine to be eligible for temporary protected status under such section, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. ADAMS:

H.R. 6893. A bill to provide for the long-term improvement of minority-serving institutions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and Labor.

By Mr. BARR (for himself, Ms. TENNEY, Mr. MAST, and Mr. GREEN of Tennessee):

H.R. 6894. A bill to limit the authority of the Secretary of the Treasury to authorize United States financial institutions to engage in certain Russian-related energy transactions blocked by Executive order 14024, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Financial Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BILIRAKIS:

H.R. 6895. A bill to establish the Commission on Sustaining Medicare and Social Se-

curity, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. FOXX (for herself and Ms. ROSS):

H.R. 6896. A bill to amend the Controlled Substances Act to improve consumer take-back programs by allowing persons who are authorized to collect controlled substances from ultimate users and other non-registrants for destruction through an authorized consumer return program to open and inspect packages, to provide a secure method of transporting substances to another location of destruction, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. GIMENEZ:

H.R. 6897. A bill to designate certain unelected entities claiming to be governments as foreign terrorist organizations, to impose certain measures with respect to countries that support such entities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committees on the Judiciary, Armed Services, and Transportation and Infrastructure, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mrs. HAYES (for herself, Mr. TAKANO, and Ms. JAYAPAL):

H.R. 6898. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to change certain eligibility provisions for loan forgiveness for teachers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and Labor.

By Mr. HILL:

H.R. 6899. A bill to prohibit the Secretary of the Treasury from engaging in transactions involving the exchange of Special Drawing Rights issued by the International Monetary Fund that are held by the Russian Federation or Belarus; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. HUIZENGA:

H.R. 6900. A bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to prohibit U.S. financial institutions from participating in the secondary market for certain Russian bonds; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ (for herself, Mr. PFLUGER, Ms. STANSBURY, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. DOGGETT, and Ms. GRANGER):

H.R. 6901. A bill to prohibit the use of Federal funds for the private interim storage of spent nuclear fuel, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. LONG:

H.R. 6902. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 660 East Harrison Street, in Republic, Missouri, as the "Special Agent Sgt. Joseph M. Peters Post Office"; to the Committee on Oversight and Reform.

By Mr. MCCLINTOCK (for himself and Mr. LAMALFA):

H.R. 6903. A bill to require the Secretary of Agriculture to carry out activities to suppress wildfires, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, and in addition to the Committee on Natural Resources, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. PORTER (for herself, Ms. TLAIB, and Ms. DELAURO):

H.R. 6904. A bill to amend title XXVII of the Public Health Service Act, the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to prohibit a group health plan and a health insurance issuer offering group or individual health insurance coverage from reducing contracted rates, or terminating contracts, with health care providers during a public health emergency; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Education and Labor, and Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. RICE of South Carolina:

H.R. 6905. A bill to provide for the withdrawal of normal trade relations treatment with the Russian Federation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. SABLON:

H.R. 6906. A bill to amend Public Law 94-241 to authorize the Secretary of Homeland Security to increase the number of permits that are available for employers in Construction and Extraction Occupations seeking Commonwealth Only Transitional Workers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ (for herself, Mr. SRES, Mr. LAWSON of Florida, Mrs. DEMINGS, Mr. CRIST, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mrs. CHERFILUS-MCCORMICK, and Mrs. MURPHY of Florida):

H.R. 6907. A bill to direct the Secretary of Homeland Security to reinstate the processing of applications for parole under the Cuban Family Reunification Parole Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BURGESS (for himself, Ms. KAPTUR, Ms. MALLIOTAKIS, Mr. CAR-

SON, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. COHEN, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. TIMMONS, Mr. PAPPAS, Mr. UPTON, Mr. BROOKS, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. SWALWELL, Ms. KUSTER, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana, Mr. STEUBE, Mr. COSTA, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. ARRINGTON, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Mr. FALLON, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. BRADY, Mr. TONY GONZALES of Texas, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. MOORE of Alabama, Mr. ADERHOLT, Mr. NEWHOUSE, Mr. CAREY, Mr. MOORE of Utah, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. COMER, Mr. PALMER, Mr. PFLUGER, Mr. STEWART, Mr. NORMAN, and Mr. WENSTRUP):

H. Con. Res. 76. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that the International Criminal Court should immediately proceed with prosecuting Russian President Vladimir Putin with war crimes should any harm befall Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy as a result of actions taken or directed by any Russian entity or authority; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. CRENSHAW (for himself, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. STEWART, Mr. MOORE of Utah, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mrs. CAMMACK, Mr. STEUBE, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. DUNCAN, Mr. MOOLENAAR, Mr. JACOBS of New York, Ms. VAN DUYN, Mr. BABIN, Mr. ARRINGTON, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Mr. ELLZEY, Ms.

MALLIOTAKIS, Mr. ROY, Mr. WALTZ, Mr. BARR, Mr. GARCIA of California, Mr. TIMMONS, Mr. CARTER of Texas, Mr. ARMSTRONG, Mr. ROUZER, Mr. LAMALFA, Ms. LETLOW, Mr. SMUCKER, Mr. MURPHY of North Carolina, Mr. BISHOP of North Carolina, Mr. RICE of South Carolina, Mr. KELLY of Mississippi, Mr. BACON, Mr. WESTERMAN, and Mr. GUEST):

H. Res. 959. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that Congress does not recognize the Russian Federation as the inheritor of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics seat as a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mrs. HINSON (for herself, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Mr. RUTHERFORD, and Mr. PALAZZO):

H. Res. 960. A resolution of inquiry directing the Secretary of Homeland Security to provide certain information relating to enforcement and removal operations; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. STEIL (for himself, Mr. MCCARTHY, Mr. SCALISE, Ms. STEFANIK, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, and Mr. LOUDERMILK):

H. Res. 961. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the House wing of the United States Capitol and House Office Buildings be open and accessible to the public; to the Committee on House Administration.

#### PRIVATE BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 3 of rule XII, private bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois:

H.R. 6908. A bill for the relief of Mykhaylo Gnatyuk and Melnik Gnatyuk; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois:

H.R. 6909. A bill for the relief of Tetyana Zvarychuk; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois:

H.R. 6910. A bill for the relief of Igor Klyuchenko; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

#### CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mrs. WAGNER:

H.R. 6891.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Sec. 8

By Mr. CICILLINE:

H.R. 6892.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States

By Ms. ADAMS:

H.R. 6893.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Under Article 1, Section 8 of the Constitution.

By Mr. BARR:

H.R. 6894.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. BILIRAKIS:

H.R. 6895.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Ms. FOXX:

H.R. 6896.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3: Congress shall have the Power . . . "to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian tribes."

By Mr. GIMENEZ:

H.R. 6897.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8. To make laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers, and all other powers vested by this Constitution in the government of the United States, or in any department or officer thereof.

By Mrs. HAYES:

H.R. 6898.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 Section 8

By Mr. HILL:

H.R. 6899.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution

By Mr. HUIZENGA:

H.R. 6900.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United State Constitution

By Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ:

H.R. 6901.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. LONG:

H.R. 6902.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 7: The Congress shall have the Power to establish Post Offices and post Roads

By Mr. MCCLINTOCK:

H.R. 6903.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2 (the Property Clause), which confers on Congress the power to make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the property belonging to the United States

By Ms. PORTER:

H.R. 6904.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. RICE of South Carolina:

H.R. 6905.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 Section 8 Clause 1 of the US Constitution

By Mr. SABLAN:

H.R. 6906.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the Constitution.

By Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ:

H.R. 6907.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution

[Page H8540]

By Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois

H.R. 6908.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the Constitution: To make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the powers enumerated under section 8 and all other Powers vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois

H.R. 6909.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the Constitution: To make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the powers enumerated under section 8 and all other Powers vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois

H.R. 6910.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the Constitution: To make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the powers enumerated under section 8 and all other Powers vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

#### ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 72: Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. BUDD, Mr. BILIRAKIS, and Ms. MALLIOTAKIS.

H.R. 304: Mr. PALLONE.

H.R. 318: Mr. GARBARINO.

H.R. 350: Ms. BROWN of Ohio and Mrs. CHERFILUS-McCORMICK.

H.R. 431: Mr. CARBAJAL, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. DELGADO, Ms. CHU, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. HARDER of California, and Mr. FOSTER.

H.R. 432: Ms. PORTER.

H.R. 675: Ms. SCANLON.

H.R. 783: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.

H.R. 859: Mr. MOOLENAAR.

H.R. 955: Mr. RYAN.

H.R. 1235: Mr. GROTHMAN.

H.R. 1255: Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Ms. SEWELL, Ms. LEE of California, Mr. HILL, Ms. BONAMICI, and Mr. CARTWRIGHT.

H.R. 1282: Mr. CASTEN, Mr. BUCSHON, Mr. ELLZEY, and Ms. JACOBS of California.

H.R. 1364: Ms. BARRAGÁN.

H.R. 1621: Ms. GARCIA of Texas and Mr. KELLER.

H.R. 1731: Ms. NEWMAN.

H.R. 1745: Mr. ELLZEY.

H.R. 1842: Mr. KIND, Mr. MCEACHIN, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Mr. COOPER, Mr. WALTZ, Ms. HOULAHAN, and Mr. SCHRADER.

H.R. 1933: Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY.

H.R. 2021: Mr. GARAMENDI.

H.R. 2046: Mr. LONG, Mr. HUDSON, and Mr. BABIN.

H.R. 2161: Mr. AUCHINCLOSS, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Ms. NEWMAN, Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY, Mr. CUELLAR, and Mr. HARDER of California.

H.R. 2222: Mr. MEEKS.

H.R. 2223: Mr. ELLZEY.

H.R. 2238: Mr. AGUILAR and Mr. MCEACHIN.

H.R. 2271: Mr. KHANNA and Ms. NEWMAN.

H.R. 2311: Mr. ROSE.

H.R. 2447: Mr. NEWHOUSE and Mrs. TORRES of California.



H.R. 2486: Mr. KIND.  
H.R. 2499: Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. HUFFMAN, and Mr. TORRES of New York.  
H.R. 2525: Mr. ALLRED, Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY, and Ms. ROSS.  
H.R. 2528: Mr. CARSON and Ms. NORTON.  
H.R. 2549: Mr. KILDEE and Mr. GOMEZ.  
H.R. 2565: Mrs. LEE of Nevada, Mr. McEACHIN, and Mr. PETERS.  
H.R. 2589: Ms. UNDERWOOD.  
H.R. 2669: Mr. POSEY.  
H.R. 2717: Mr. CICILLINE.  
H.R. 2718: Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS, Mrs. MILLER of West Virginia, and Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois.  
H.R. 2734: Ms. KUSTER.  
H.R. 2748: Ms. FOXX, Mr. GUEST, Mr. TIMMONS, and Mr. LEVIN of California.  
H.R. 2807: Ms. SCHRIER.  
H.R. 2903: Mrs. LUCIA and Mr. NORMAN.  
H.R. 3054: Mr. POCAN.  
H.R. 3056: Mr. LANGEVIN.  
H.R. 3109: Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia.  
H.R. 3342: Mr. UPTON.  
H.R. 3440: Mr. BLUMENAUER.  
H.R. 3482: Mr. ROUZER.  
H.R. 3488: Ms. KUSTER.  
H.R. 3541: Mr. VALADAO.  
H.R. 3586: Mr. TRONE.  
H.R. 3773: Ms. DEGETTE.  
H.R. 3811: Mr. DONALDS.  
H.R. 3824: Mr. NEGESE and Mr. MCGOVERN.  
H.R. 3867: Ms. BARRAGÁN.  
H.R. 3897: Ms. DEGETTE, Ms. STANSBURY, Ms. BOURDEAUX, and Mr. SMUCKER.  
H.R. 4003: Mr. CICILLINE.  
H.R. 4017: Ms. GARCIA of Texas.  
H.R. 4057: Ms. PORTER.  
H.R. 4075: Ms. HOULAHAN.  
H.R. 4146: Mr. LAMB and Mr. SCHRADER.  
H.R. 4166: Mr. SARBANES.  
H.R. 4173: Ms. BARRAGÁN, Mr. KHANNA, and Mr. PETERS.  
H.R. 4194: Ms. LOFGREN.  
H.R. 4199: Mr. DAVIDSON.  
H.R. 4217: Mrs. TRAHAN.  
H.R. 4286: Mr. PAPPAS.  
H.R. 4315: Mr. PAPPAS.  
H.R. 4437: Ms. NORTON.  
H.R. 4472: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.  
H.R. 4479: Mr. RUTHERFORD.  
H.R. 4602: Mr. SWALWELL and Mr. RUIZ.  
H.R. 4603: Ms. DEGETTE.  
H.R. 4736: Ms. SCANLON.  
H.R. 4750: Ms. HOULAHAN.  
H.R. 4801: Ms. SCHRIER.  
H.R. 4892: Mr. GRIJALVA.  
H.R. 5048: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.  
H.R. 5172: Mr. LAMB.  
H.R. 5209: Ms. MENG.  
H.R. 5318: Mr. AMODEI.  
H.R. 5382: Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana.  
H.R. 5429: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.  
H.R. 5497: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.  
H.R. 5514: Mr. BAIRD.  
H.R. 5526: Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD.  
H.R. 5699: Mr. THOMPSON of California.  
H.R. 5759: Mr. RICE of South Carolina.  
H.R. 5819: Mr. COOPER.  
H.R. 5922: Mr. SAN NICOLAS.  
H.R. 5954: Mr. PFLUGER.  
H.R. 6132: Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. CARL, and Mrs. HARTZLER.

H.R. 6134: Mr. PERLMUTTER and Mr. GROTHMAN.  
H.R. 6145: Mr. OWENS.  
H.R. 6161: Mr. GROTHMAN and Mr. OWENS.  
H.R. 6184: Mr. MOONEY, Mr. NORMAN, Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana, Mr. PALMER, and Mr. NEWHOUSE.  
H.R. 6202: Mr. COLE.  
H.R. 6205: Ms. NORTON.  
H.R. 6273: Mr. RYAN, Mr. KATKO, and Ms. MATSUI.  
H.R. 6280: Mr. OWENS.  
H.R. 6353: Ms. DEGETTE.  
H.R. 6394: Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania.  
H.R. 6397: Mr. FITZPATRICK.  
H.R. 6403: Mr. RICE of South Carolina.  
H.R. 6421: Mr. STEUBE.  
H.R. 6448: Ms. PORTER, Mr. CORREA, and Mr. RESCHENTHALER.  
H.R. 6470: Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania.  
H.R. 6486: Mr. DONALDS.  
H.R. 6495: Mr. ZELDIN.  
H.R. 6523: Mrs. MURPHY of Florida.  
H.R. 6534: Mr. DONALDS.  
H.R. 6557: Mr. TAKANO.  
H.R. 6577: Mr. DESAULNIER and Ms. NEWMAN.  
H.R. 6592: Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas.  
H.R. 6597: Mr. OWENS.  
H.R. 6630: Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. HARDER of California, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. CORREA, and Mrs. STEEL.  
H.R. 6631: Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. HARDER of California, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. CORREA, and Mrs. STEEL.  
H.R. 6636: Mr. RYAN.  
H.R. 6647: Mr. RUTHERFORD.  
H.R. 6649: Mr. DAVIDSON.  
H.R. 6658: Mr. OWENS and Mr. BANKS.  
H.R. 6659: Mrs. KIM of California, Mr. CAREY, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Mr. EMMER, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. TIMMONS, Mr. VAN DREW, Mr. BUCHANAN, and Mr. GROTHMAN.  
H.R. 6668: Mr. RESCHENTHALER.  
H.R. 6676: Mr. RUTHERFORD.  
H.R. 6685: Mr. JONES.  
H.R. 6702: Mr. GROTHMAN.  
H.R. 6703: Mr. WESTERMAN.  
H.R. 6735: Ms. MANNING.  
H.R. 6738: Mr. FITZPATRICK.  
H.R. 6748: Mr. COLE, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. FERGUSON, Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana, Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana, Mr. STEUBE, Mr. PALMER, Mr. FITZGERALD, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. HUIZENGA, Mrs. SPARTZ, and Mr. JACKSON.  
H.R. 6754: Ms. MALLIOTAKIS.  
H.R. 6756: Mrs. HAYES.  
H.R. 6759: Mr. NADLER.  
H.R. 6764: Mr. GROTHMAN and Mrs. HARTZLER.  
H.R. 6800: Mr. DONALDS.  
H.R. 6821: Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana.  
H.R. 6823: Ms. UNDERWOOD, Ms. LOIS FRANKEL of Florida, and Mr. SAN NICOLAS.  
H.R. 6825: Ms. MANNING.  
H.R. 6829: Mr. MCCLINTOCK.  
H.R. 6835: Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. DELAURO,

Mr. KIND, Mr. BEYER, Mr. HIGGINS of New York, Ms. SÁNCHEZ, Ms. PLASKETT, Mr. VEASEY, Mr. RICE of South Carolina, Ms. CHU, and Ms. DELBENE.  
H.R. 6836: Mrs. BEATTY.  
H.R. 6840: Mr. FULCHER.  
H.R. 6847: Mr. LEVIN of California.  
H.R. 6853: Mrs. HAYES, Mr. VARGAS, and Mr. HIMES.  
H.R. 6854: Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky and Mr. BARR.  
H.R. 6858: Mr. ELLZEY, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. OWENS, Mr. LATURNER, Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS, Mr. CLINE, Mr. FERGUSON, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. KINZINGER, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mrs. SPARTZ, Mr. GIMENEZ, Mr. SIMPSON, and Mr. MELJER.  
H.R. 6862: Mr. MCGOVERN.  
H.R. 6864: Ms. SCHRIER and Mr. PANETTA.  
H.R. 6866: Ms. NEWMAN and Ms. ADAMS.  
H.R. 6872: Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York.  
H.R. 6874: Mr. TURNER.  
H.R. 6884: Mr. PFLUGER.  
H.R. 6886: Mr. BALDERSON, Mr. FERGUSON, Mr. ESTES, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. CAREY, Mr. MOOLENAAR, Mr. BUCSHON, Mr. VALADAO, Mrs. MILLER of Illinois, Mr. GIBBS, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. NORMAN, and Ms. VAN DUYN.  
H.R. 6887: Mr. WEBER of Texas.  
H.R. 6890: Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. VAN DREW, and Mrs. MURPHY of Florida.  
H.J. Res. 46: Mr. BIGGS, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. BUCK, and Mr. MCKINLEY.  
H.J. Res. 53: Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois and Ms. BONAMICI.  
H.J. Res. 73: Mr. GRIJALVA.  
H. Con. Res. 33: Ms. BROWN of Ohio.  
H. Con. Res. 72: Mr. HARDER of California.  
H. Con. Res. 75: Ms. JACKSON LEE and Mr. CRENSHAW.  
H. Res. 237: Ms. SALAZAR, Ms. WILLIAMS of Georgia, Mr. FITZPATRICK, and Ms. PORTER.  
H. Res. 489: Mr. GALLEGO.  
H. Res. 806: Mr. MALINOWSKI.  
H. Res. 833: Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. PANETTA, Mrs. TORRES of California, Mr. DOGGETT, and Mr. MCGOVERN.  
H. Res. 881: Mr. GOOD of Virginia and Ms. Sánchez.  
H. Res. 888: Mr. MCNERNEY.  
H. Res. 920: Mr. CONNOLLY.  
H. Res. 923: Ms. NEWMAN.  
H. Res. 934: Mr. RUTHERFORD and Mr. MEUSER.  
H. Res. 956: Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. KEATING, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, and Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania.

#### DELETIONS OF SPONSORS FROM PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were deleted from public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 2748: Mr. BOWMAN.  
H.R. 6886: Mr. WENSTRUP.